

AN ADVANCED HISTORY OF INDIA

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Vol. I

By

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NOTE TO THE 1965 REPRINT

THE continued appreciation of the book by the public and its great popularity among students have made it necessary to publish another reprint of the second edition. We have taken advantage of this not only to make minor corrections, but also to bring the book up to date by making suitable additions and alterations in Appendix II (p. 1012) and the Chronology (pp. 1067–8).

We regret to announce that since the publication of the second edition we have lost our colleague Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri, who died on 4th May, 1957.

R.C.M.
K.K.D.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The chequered annals of our ancient land have been the theme of many a writer of the East as well as the West. If a fresh attempt is now made to recite the *itihāsa purātana* it is due in large measure to the accumulation of new stocks of information which every year are yielded to the spade of the archæologist and the patient industry of the scholar. It is also due in part to the teaching of experience which suggests the need, with fresh data at our disposal, of viewing things from a different angle of vision.

The book which is now published is primarily intended to meet the requirements of advanced students who have already an acquaintance with the broad outlines of the subject. It has been the endeavour of the authors to place before them in the course of the narrative such details about the salient features of Indian History in the different periods of its evolution as may be fitted into the framework of the story provided for them at the earlier stages of their educational career. In doing this a special stress has been laid on administrative, social, economic, and cultural aspects, which do not always receive in studies of this kind the attention that is their due. A prominent place has also been given to such important topics as the colonial and cultural expansion of the ancient Hindus, the evolution of different types of art and architecture, and the growth of a new India as a result of the impact of different civilisations in recent times.

The history of the latest periods has been written on a somewhat novel plan. Instead of dealing separately with the brief rule of each succeeding Governor-General, an attempt has been made to treat in their logical sequence such absorbing subjects as the rise and growth of a remote island people as a political power in our country, the different phases of constitutional and administrative changes, and the social, religious, and economic conditions during well-defined periods. In other words, in treating the events of the modern age, attention has in the main been focused not so much on personalities as on movements and courses of policy. This method may involve some loss of dramatic interest but has the merit of tracing clearly the main threads of history in a given epoch.

We have tried to make the details as accurate and authentic as possible in the light of the latest researches, and where no definite conclusion is possible we have sought to indicate the different view-points in a detached spirit. An attempt has been made to add flesh and blood to the dry skeleton of history, particularly that of the earlier periods, with the help of such materials as may be gleaned from a close scrutiny of the original sources. The maps, select bibliographies, and genealogical and chronological tables, will, it is hoped, be of some use to earnest investigators. We need not dilate upon other special features of the book which cannot be missed by anyone who examines it.

A joint literary production, in spite of its obvious advantages, is not unlikely to suffer from some serious defects. The authors sought to minimise these as far as possible by periodical discussions and scrutiny of the contents of each chapter. Whether, and how far, they have been able to avoid the imperfections that are apt to occur in a work of this kind, it is for others to judge. Apart from this, some defects may be attributed to the printing of the book in Great Britain at a time when communication between the authors and the publishers was rendered more and more difficult by circumstances over which they had no control. All these shortcomings may, we hope, be largely removed in future editions of the work. In the meantime we can only crave the indulgence of our readers for such errors of omission and commission as they may detect in the following pages.

In writing Oriental names and expressions we have adopted in a general way the method of transliteration which has been followed in standard works like the *Cambridge History of India*.

We take this opportunity of expressing our deep obligation to the *pūrva sūris* and to various individuals and associations who have lent us illustrations, etc., belonging to them, with permission to make photographic reproductions. Our special thanks are due to the representatives of the publishers for the keen interest they have taken in the progress of the work. If the book now offered to students helps in some measure to prepare the ground for a fuller and clearer view of the "broadening stream" of our country's history, the labour of the authors will be amply repaid.

R. C. Majumdar
H. C. Raychaudhuri
Kalikinkar Datta

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

POLITICAL changes of a momentous character have taken place in India since the first publication of this volume. The most important of these is the abdication of power and authority in India by the British, with the grant of virtual independence to the Dominions of India and Pakistan. It has therefore been thought desirable to bring this history up to August 15, 1947, when power was actually transferred to the hands of the Indians. Although in general this revised edition does not go beyond that date and does not even refer to such notable events as the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, nevertheless passing allusion has occasionally been made to later happenings in order to make the treatment of some non-controversial topics up-to-date.

The recent integration of Indian States into different Unions took place after August 15, 1947, but the readjustment of the boundaries of these states has so completely changed the political geography of modern India that it would be unwise to ignore it in a text-book of Indian History. We have accordingly dealt with this matter in an Appendix.

A second Appendix gives a summary of the new Constitution of India which came into force on January 26, 1950.

A new chapter has been added to describe India's struggle for independence, and the accounts of constitutional changes in 1935 have been somewhat abridged. The whole book has been thoroughly revised in order to correct errors and incorporate the results of the latest researches.

The appreciation of this book by the press and the public has exceeded our greatest expectations, and we have spared no pains to make it still more useful by means of the new material added to this edition.

R.C.M.
H.C.R.C.
K.K.D.

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[1] Part I, chapters i, and iii–xiv, are by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri; chapters ii, xv and xvi by Dr. R. C. Majumdar.

PART II.

MEDIEVAL INDIA

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THE MUSLIM CONQUEST AND THE DELHI SULTĀNATE

Book II [2]

THE MUGHUL EMPIRE

[1] Book I, chapter i, is by Dr. R. C. Majumdar; and chapters ii to vi by Dr. Kalikinkar Datta.

[2] Book II is by Dr. Kalikinkar Datta.

PART I

ANCIENT INDIA

CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL ASPECTS AND UNDERLYING UNITY

INDIA is the name given to the vast peninsula which the continent of Asia throws out to the south of the magnificent mountain ranges that stretch in a swordlike curve across the southern border of Tibet. This huge expanse of territory, which deserves the name of a sub-continent, has the shape of an irregular quadrilateral. Ancient geographers referred to it as being "constituted with a four-fold conformation" (*chatuḥ saṁsthāna saṁsthitam*), "on its south and west and east is the Great Ocean, the Himavat range stretches along its north like the string of a bow". The lofty mountain chain in the north—to which the name Himavat is applied in the above passage—includes not only the snow-capped ridges of the Himālayas but also their less elevated offshoots—the Patkai, Lushai and Chittāgong Hills in the east, and the Sulaiman and Kirthar ranges in the west. These lead down to the sea and separate the country from the wooded valley of the Irrāwaddy on the one hand and the hilly tableland of Irān on the other.

Politically, the Indian empire as it existed before August 15, 1947, extended beyond these natural boundaries at several points and included not only Baluchistān beyond the Kirthar range, but also some smaller areas that lay scattered in the Bay of Bengal. With the exception of the outlying territories beyond the seas, the whole of the vast region described above lay roughly between Long. 61° and 96° E. and Lat. 8° and 37° N. Its greatest length was about 1,800 miles, and its breadth not less than 1,360 miles. The total area of the empire, excluding Burma which was constituted as a separate unit under the Government of India Act of 1935, might be put at 1,575,000 square miles and the population inhabiting it at three hundred and eighty-eight millions.

The sub-continent of India, stretching from the Himālayas to the sea, is known to the Hindus as *Bhārata-Varsha* or the land of Bharata, a king famous in Purāṇic tradition. It was said to form part of a larger unit called *Jambu-dvīpa* which was considered to be the innermost of seven concentric island-continents into

which the earth, as conceived by Hindu cosmographers, was supposed to have been divided. The Purāṇic account of these insular continents contains a good deal of what is fanciful, but early Buddhist evidence suggests that *Jambu-dvīpa* was a territorial designation actually in use from the third century B.C. at the latest, and was applied to that part of Asia, outside China, throughout which the prowess of the great imperial family of the Mauryas made itself felt. The name "India" was applied to the country by the Greeks. It corresponds to the "Hi(n)du" of the old Persian epigraphs. Like "*Sapta sindhavah*" and "*Hapta Hindu*"—the appellations of the country of the Aryans in the *Veda* and the *Vendidad*—it is derived from the Sindhu (the Indus), the great river which constitutes the most imposing feature of that part of the sub-continent which seems to have been the cradle of its earliest known civilisation. Closely connected with "*Hindu*" are the later designations "*Hind*" and "*Hindusthān*" as found in the pages of mediaeval writers.

India proper, excluding its outlying dependencies, is divided primarily into four distinct regions, viz., (1) the hill country of the north, styled *Parvatāśrayin* in the Purāṇas, stretching from the swampy jungles of the Tarai to the crest of the Himālayas and affording space for the upland territories of Kāshmīr, Kangra, Tehri, Kumāun, Nepāl, Sikkim and Bhutān; (2) the great northern plain embracing the flat wheat-producing valleys of the Indus and its tributaries, the sandy deserts of Sind and Rājputāna as well as the fertile tracts watered by the Ganges, the Jumnā and the Brahmaputra; (3) the plateau of South Central India and the Deccan stretching south of the Gangetic plain and shut in from the rest of the peninsula by the main range of the Pāripātra, roughly the Western Vindhyas, the Vindhyas proper, the Sahyādri or the Western Ghāts and the Mahendra or the Eastern Ghāts; and (4) the long and narrow maritime plains of the south extending from the Ghāts to the sea and containing the rich ports of the Koṅkān and Mālabār, as well as the fertile deltas of the Godāvarī, the Kṛishṇā and the Kāverī.

These territorial compartments marked by the hand of nature do not exactly coincide with the traditional divisions of the country known to antiquity. In ancient literature we have reference to a fivefold division of India. In the centre of the Indo-Gangetic plain was the *Madhya-deśa* stretching, according to the Brāhmanical accounts, from the river Sarasvatī, which flowed past Thānesar and Pehoa (ancient Prithūdaka), to Allahābād and Benares, and, according to the early records of the Buddhists, to the Rājmahal Hills. The western part of this area was known as the

Brahmarshi-deśa, and the entire region was roughly equivalent to *Āryāvarta* as described in the grammar of Patañjali. But the denotation of the latter term is wider in some law-books which take it to mean the whole of the vast territory lying between the Himālayas and the Vindhyas and extending from sea to sea. To the north of the *Madhya-déśa*, beyond Pehoa, lay *Uttarāpatha* or *Udīchya* (North-west India), to its west *Aparānta* or *Pratīchya* (Western India), to its south *Dakshiṇāpatha* or the Deccan, and to its east *Pūrva-deśa* or *Prāchya*, the Prasii of Alexander's historians. The term *Uttarāpatha* was at times applied to the whole of Northern India, and *Dakshiṇāpatha* was in some ancient works restricted to the upper Deccan north of the Kṛishṇā, the far south being termed *Tamilakam* or the Tamil country, while *Pūrva-deśa* in early times included the eastern part of the "middle region" beyond the *Antarvedī* or the Gangetic Doāb. To the five primary divisions the Purāṇas sometimes add two others, viz., the *Parvatāśrayin* or Himālayan tract, and the Vindhyan region.

The course of Indian history, like that of other countries in the world, is in large measure determined by its geography. Each of the territorial units into which the hand of nature divides the country has a distinct story of its own. The intersection of the land by deep rivers and winding chains flanked by sandy deserts or impenetrable forests, fostered a spirit of isolation and cleft the country asunder into small political and even social units, whose divergences were accentuated by the infinite variety of local conditions. Tendencies towards union and coalescence are most marked only in the vast riparian plain of the north and the extensive plateau in the interior of the peninsula, enriched and regenerated by the life-giving streams that flow from the heights of the Himālayas and the Western Ghāts. The stupendous mountain chain which fences this country off from the rest of Asia, while it constituted India a world by itself and favoured the growth of a distinct type of civilisation, never sufficed to shelter the sunny realms of the Indus and the Ganges from the inroads of ambitious potentates or wandering nomads. These invaders stormed one after another through the narrow defiles that break through the great rocky barrier and lead into the plains of the interior. The long coast studded with wealthy ports "lay open to the barks of" intrepid buccaneers and adventurers from far-off climes.

The mountain passes and the sea, however, were not mere gates of invasion and conquest. They fostered also a more pacific intercourse with the outside world. They brought to this country

the pious pilgrim and the peaceful trader and constituted highways for the diffusion of Indian culture and civilisation throughout the greater part of the Asiatic continent as well as the islands that lie off the coast of Coromandel and the peninsula of Malaya.

The size of India is enormous. The country is almost as large as the whole of the continent of Europe without Russia, and is almost twenty times as big as Great Britain. Even more remarkable than the immensity of its area is the extreme diversity of its physical features. India embraces within its boundaries lofty mountains steeped in eternal snow, as well as flat plains "salted by every tide", arid deserts almost untouched by the feet of man, as well as fertile river valleys supporting a population of over three thousand persons to the square mile. The greater part of this sub-continent had been knit into one political unit in the nineteenth century. But from August 15, 1947, two self-governing Dominions were carved out of it, known respectively as India and Pakistan, which form parts of the British Commonwealth. There are, however, certain areas, e.g. Nepāl, Bhutān, and the French and Portuguese possessions, which lie outside the limits of this Commonwealth. There were, moreover, more than five hundred states, ruled by Indian Princes, with a total area of about 700,000 square miles, which commemorated the vanished glory of defunct kingdoms and empires, and enjoyed a certain amount of autonomy in internal affairs under the aegis of the British Crown. With very few exceptions they are now undergoing a process of integration with one or other of the new Dominions.

The magnitude of the population of India is quite in keeping with the immensity of its geographical dimensions. As early as the fifth century B.C. Herodotus observed that "of all the nations that we know, it is India which has the largest population". The total number of inhabitants included within the sub-continent, excluding Burma, according to the Census of 1941, amounts to three hundred and eighty-eight millions, or about one-fifth of that of the whole world. This huge assemblage of human beings is made up of diverse ethnic groups, split up into countless castes, professing numerous creeds, speaking about two hundred different languages and dialects. It represents every phase of social evolution, from that of the primitive tribesman who still lives by hunting and collecting forest produce, to that of the polished inhabitant of cities well equipped with the most up-to-date scientific or humanistic lore.

A close examination of this variegated conglomeration of races, castes and creeds reveals, however, a deep underlying unity which

is apt to be missed by the superficial observer. This unity was undoubtedly nurtured in the nineteenth century by a uniform system of administration and the spread of education on modern lines. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that it is wholly the outcome of recent events and was quite non-existent in ages long gone by. The fundamental unity of India is emphasised by the name *Bhārata-Varsha*, or land of Bharata, given to the whole country in the Epics and the Purāṇas, and the designation *Bhāratī santati*, or descendants of Bharata, applied to its people.

> "*Uttaram yat samudrasya*
> *Himādreśchaiva dakshiṇam,*
> *Varsham tad Bhāratam nāma*
> *Bhāratī yatra santatiḥ.*"
> (Vishṇu Purāṇa, II, 3. 1.)

"The country that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains is called Bhārata; there dwell the descendants of Bharata."

This sense of unity was ever present before the minds of the theologians, political philosophers and poets who spoke of the "thousand *Yojanas* (leagues) of land that stretch from the Himālayas to the sea as the proper domain of a single universal emperor" and eulogised monarchs who sought to extend their sway from the snowy mountains in the north to Adam's Bridge in the south, and from the valley of the Brahmaputra in the east to the land beyond the seven mouths of the Indus in the west. In the third century B.C. a single language, Prākṛit, sufficed to bring the message of a royal missionary to the doors of his humblest subjects throughout this vast sub-continent. A few centuries later another language, Sanskrit, found its way to the royal archives of the remotest corners of this country. The ancient èpics—the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*—were studied with as much devotion in the courts of the Tamil and Kanarese countries as in the intellectual circles of Taxila in the western Punjab, and *Naimishāraṇya* in the upper Ganges valley. The old religion of the Vedas and the Purāṇas still gives solace to the vast majority of the people of this country, and temples in honour of Śiva and Vishṇu raise their spires on the snowy heights of the Himālayas as well as in the flat deltas of the Kṛishṇā and the Kāverī. The religious communities that do not worship in these shrines have not been altogether unaffected by their Hindu surroundings. Instances are not unknown of friendship and communion between

saints and prophets of rival creeds. Since the days of al-Biruni many adherents of Islam, the second great religion of India in point of numbers, have shown a profound interest in the science, philosophy and religion of their Hindu brethren, and to this day Hindu practices are not altogether a negligible factor in the village life of this country for the votaries of a different creed. Islam with its ideals of social democracy and imperialism has, in its turn, done much to counteract the fissiparous tendencies of caste and check the centrifugal forces in Indian politics by keeping alive the ideal of a Pan-Indian State throughout the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER II

THE PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD

HISTORY is a record of the achievements of man. The history of India, like the annals of every other country, should therefore begin with an account of the times when men first settled in this land. But history proper only deals with facts, and facts can only be known from records of some kind or other. We cannot know the history of any people who have left no record of their existence. There may have been people or peoples who lived in India in primitive times, but the evidence of whose existence has not yet been discovered. For the present, at any rate, they must be left out of account altogether. We shall only deal with those inhabitants of India whose existence is known to us from some records they have left behind.

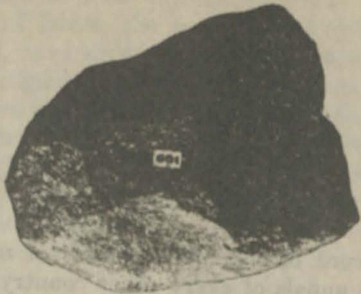
To begin with, these records consist almost solely of the rude implements which the people used in their daily lives. According to the nature and material of these implements, the earliest settlers in India have been divided into two classes, viz., Palaeolithic and Neolithic.

Palaeolithic Men

The term Palaeolithic is derived from two Greek words meaning Old Stone. This name is applied to the earliest people, as the only evidence of their existence is furnished by a number of rude stone implements. These are small pieces of rough undressed stones, chipped into various forms, which were originally fitted with handles made of sticks or bones. They served as weapons for hunting wild animals, and could also be used as hammers or for purposes of cutting and boring.

These chipped stones have been found in large numbers in different parts of India. They are usually, though not exclusively, made of a species of hard rock called "quartzite". From this fact the Palaeolithic men in India are also known as "Quartzite men".

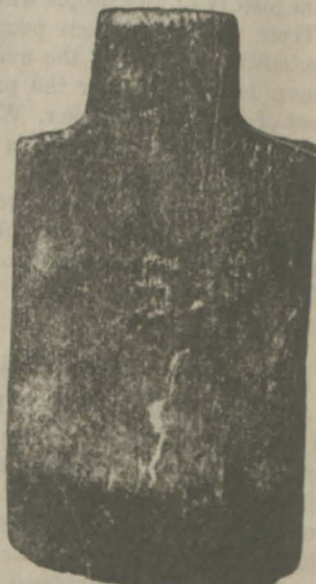
From the rough and rude stone implements which are the only records left behind by the earliest-known inhabitants of India, we



STRAIGHT-EDGED CLEAVER OF BROWNISH QUARTZITE: CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT, MADRAS PRESIDENCY



POLISHED CELT WITH POINTED BUTT OF SPECKLED TRAP: BĀNDĀ DISTRICT, ĀGRA PROVINCE (U.P.)



POLISHED SHOULDERED CELT WITH ADZE-LIKE EDGE, OF DARK GREY SLATE, FROM THE TRANS-GANGETIC AREA

can form only a very vague idea of their lives and habits. It is obvious that they were ignorant of any metals, and most of them had no fixed homes, though a few might have made huts of some sort with trees and leaves. They lived in constant dread of wild animals like tigers, lions, elephants and the rhinoceros. They

had no idea of agriculture, but lived on the flesh of animals and such fruits and vegetables as grew wild in jungles. They could not make pottery, and probably did not even know how to make a fire. In short, from our standpoint we can only regard them as savages, little removed from an animal life. It is well to remember this if we are to judge aright the long strides that men have made in developing that culture and civilisation of which we are so justly proud to-day.

It has been suggested that the Palaeolithic men belonged to the Negrito race, like the modern people of the Andaman Islands, and were characterised by short stature, dark skin, woolly hair and flat noses.

Neolithic Men

The capacity for progress is, however, an inherent characteristic of human beings which distinguishes them from animals. Consequently, as years rolled by, men acquired greater knowledge and skill in mastering the forces of nature. The rate of progress is, of course, difficult to estimate, and it may have been hundreds or thousands of years before a distinctly higher type of civilisation was evolved in India. The men who belonged to this age are called Neolithic. This term is also derived from two Greek words meaning New Stone. The significance of this name lies in the fact that in this age also men had to depend solely on stone implements, and were ignorant of any metals, except gold. But their implements were very different from those of the preceding age, for they used stones other than quartzite, and these were not merely chipped, but in most cases "ground, grooved and polished" as well. They were highly finished articles made into different forms to serve various purposes. They can be easily distinguished from the rough and rude implements of the Palaeolithic Age.

Remains of the Neolithic men are found in almost every part of India. An ancient factory for the manufacture of stone implements has been discovered in the Bellary district, Madras, where we can still trace the various stages of their construction.

The civilisation of the Neolithic men shows distinct traces of advance. They cultivated land and grew fruits and corn. They also domesticated animals like the ox and the goat. They knew the art of producing fire by the friction of bamboos or pieces of wood, and made pottery, at first by hand, and then with the potter's wheel. They lived in caves and decorated their walls by painting scenes of hunting and dancing. A few of these can be seen to-day both in Northern and Southern India. They also painted and

decorated their pottery. They constructed boats and went out to sea. They could spin cotton and wool and weave cloth. They used to bury their dead, and neolithic tombs have been discovered in some parts of India. Sometimes the dead body was put in a large urn and many of these urns have been discovered intact under the ground. The tombs known as *Dolmens* consist of three or more stone props in a circle, supporting a massive roof stone. These dolmens or megalithic tombs are characteristic of the Neolithic Age all over the world.

The age of the Palaeolithic and Neolithic men is called prehistoric, as we know hardly anything of this period save the meagre evidence supplied by the cave drawings and stone implements. We have not even any definite knowledge regarding the relations between these two groups of men. There are indications that suggest that the Neolithic men may have been the descendants of their Palaeolithic predecessors. But there are certain facts which militate against this view. Some scholars are of opinion that not only are there no such relationships, but that there was a gap of many hundreds or thousands of years between the two periods. So long as our evidence remains as meagre as it now is, there will always be scope for such differences of opinion, and we shall have to deal with theories or hypotheses based on speculations. The question, however, belongs to the domain of anthropology rather than history, and need not be pursued any further.

The Age of Metals

There is, however, a general agreement that Neolithic men were the ancestors of the people who ushered in the next stage of civilisation which is distinguished by the knowledge and use of metals. That the transition from stone to metal was a slow and gradual process is proved by two undeniable facts, viz., the use of stone and metallic implements side by side, and the close resemblance in the shape of early metal and Neolithic implements.

There was, however, no uniformity in the use of metals in different parts of India. In Northern India, copper replaced stone as the ordinary material for tools and weapons. Axes, swords, spearheads and various other objects made of that metal have come to light in different parts of the country. It was not till centuries later that iron came to be known and gradually used as a substitute for copper. We can thus distinguish between a Copper Age and the Early Iron Age in Northern India. In Southern India, however,

the Iron Age immediately succeeded the Stone Age, and we find no traces of the intermediate Copper Age.

Bronze is a good substitute for copper. It is an alloy made up of nine parts of copper and one of tin, and, being harder than copper, is more suitable for the manufacture of tools and weapons. We find accordingly that in some countries in Europe a Bronze Age succeeded the Neolithic. Bronze implements of early date have been found in India along with those of copper, but it does not appear that that metal was ever generally used in India to the exclusion of copper. In other words, there was, properly speaking, no Bronze Age in India.

With the Copper and Iron Ages we enter the limits of the historical period. It is a moot point to decide whether the period of the *Ṛig-Veda*—the earliest period of Indian history for which we possess written documents—belongs to the former or to the latter epoch. The general opinion is in favour of the view that the Iron Age had already commenced when the *Ṛig-Veda* was composed. Be that as it may, we have now a splendid example of the civilisation of the Copper Age. This civilisation flourished in the Indus Valley and spread over the neighbouring regions to a considerable distance. It is known as the Indus Valley civilisation and merits a detailed treatment in view of its importance. But before taking it up we must say a few words about the races of India.

Races

If we examine the people of India, both according to physical type and language, we can easily distinguish four broad classes.

First, the majority of high-class Hindus, who are tall, fair-skinned and long-nosed and whose language is derived from Sanskrit. These are known as Aryans or Indo-Aryans.

Secondly, the people mostly living in the South Indian Peninsula, whose features are somewhat different from those of the first group and whose languages—Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese and Malayalam—are entirely different from Sanskrit. These are called by the generic name of "Dravidians".

Thirdly, primitive tribes living in hills and jungles who offer a striking contrast to the first category in physical type, being short in stature, dark-skinned and snub-nosed. Their languages are also quite different from those of the preceding two. The Kols, Bhīls and Muṇḍās belong to this class.

Fourthly, a people with strong Mongolian features, beardless, yellow in colour, snub-nosed, with flat faces and prominent

cheekbones. These mostly live on the slopes of the Himālayas and mountains of Assam. The Gurkhās, Bhutiyas and Khāsis are striking examples of this class.

The last two classes of people may be regarded as descendants of the Neolithic peoples. We have already referred to the primitive type of civilisation in the Neolithic Age, and it does not appear that these peoples have made any appreciable progress during the thousands of years that have elapsed since then.

There is hardly any doubt that these primitive races at one time spread all over India. But they had to yield to the superior forces of the Dravidians, who gradually occupied some of their lands. The same process was repeated when large tracts of the country were conquered at a later time by the Aryans. The effect of these successive invasions by more cultured races on the primitive peoples was far-reaching. Many must have perished, and many more, reduced to subjection, formed the lowest strata in the community of the conquerors, while a few bands were saved from a similar fate by the shelter offered by fastnesses and jungles. This last category alone has preserved, to a certain extent, the physical features, the languages, and the habits of their remote ancestors, offering us a fair glimpse of the sort of life they must have led in times long gone by.

Philological researches have established a connection between these Neolithic peoples of India and the primitive tribes that lived in Indo-China, the Malay Peninsula and the Indian Archipelago. The German scholar Schmidt, for example, holds that the languages of the Muṇḍās and Khāsis belong to the same family of speech (called Austric) from which those of the peoples of Indo-China and Indonesia have been derived. According to this view, these peoples, who were originally settled in India, "passed gradually to the east and south-east and traversed, at first the whole length of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, and then over all the islands of the Pacific Ocean up to its eastern extremity". Schmidt further believed that another current of emigration of the same people also started from India, but turned more directly towards the south and, touching only the western fringe of the Pacific Ocean, proceeded, perhaps by way of New Guinea, towards the continent of Australia.

According to Schmidt's view, the Neolithic men of India played a dominant part in the early history of South-eastern Asia. But his theory has already been challenged by other scholars and can only be regarded as a provisional hypothesis.

The Indus Valley Civilisation

In recent years archaeological excavations have been carried on at Mohenjo-Daro in the Larkana district, Sind, and at Harappā, in the Montgomery district of the Punjab. These and smaller trial excavations at various other sites in Sind and in Baluchistān have proved beyond doubt that some five thousand years ago a highly civilised community flourished in these regions. The antiquity of civilisation in India is thus carried back nearly to the same period which witnessed the growth of ancient civilisations in Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia. The valley of the Indus thus takes its rank with the valleys of the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates as having contributed to the most ancient phase of human civilisation of which we are yet aware.

Unfortunately we have no written records about the Indus valley civilisation comparable to those we possess in respect of the others. A number of seals have certainly been discovered with a few letters engraved on each, but these still remain undeciphered. We are therefore totally ignorant of the political history of the Indus valley and are not in a position to form an adequate idea of its culture and civilisation. We possess, at best, a vague and general idea of the subject which is entirely derived from a careful examination of the objects unearthed at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappā.

Mohenjo-Daro—Mound of the Dead—is the local name of a high mound situated in the plains of Larkana in a narrow strip of land between the main bed of the Indus river and the western Nara canal. The surrounding region is wonderfully fertile and is called even to-day Nakhlistān, or the "Garden of Sind". Here a city was built some five thousand years ago. This city was successively destroyed and rebuilt no less than seven times, the inundation of the Indus being perhaps the chief agency of destruction. The rebuilding did not always immediately follow the destruction, but sometimes the city remained in ruins for a considerable period before a new city rose upon them. Thus, after the foundation of the city, many centuries passed before it was finally abandoned.

The ruins of this city have now been laid bare, and we shall try to sum up what we have been able to learn about it and the people who lived therein.

The City

The city is fairly big. The dwelling-houses are many in number and vary in size from a small building with two rooms to a palatial structure having a frontage of 85 feet and a depth of 97 feet, with outer walls four to five feet thick. They are made of bricks which are usually well burnt and of good quality. Sometimes very large bricks, measuring 20¼ inches long, 10½ inches broad and 3½ inches thick, are used. The big houses have two or more storeys and are furnished with paved floors and courtyards, doors, windows and narrow stairways. It is specially noteworthy that almost every house has wells, drains and bathrooms.

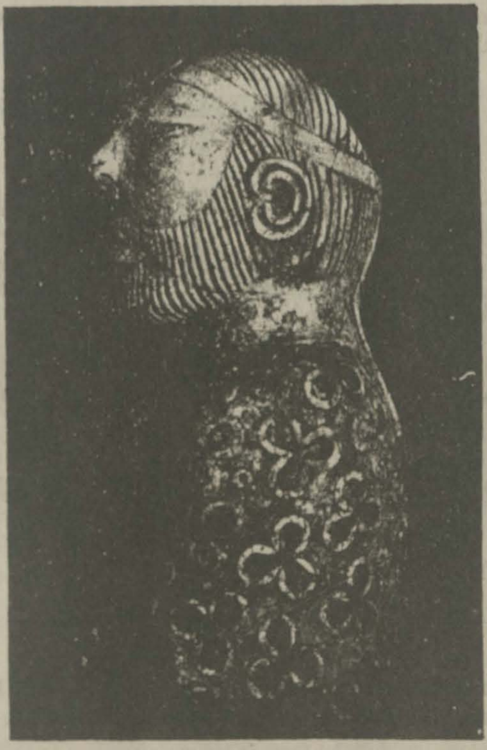


MOHENJO-DARO. THE GREAT BATH

In addition to the numerous dwelling-houses, we find a few spacious buildings of elaborate structure and design. Some of these contain large pillared halls, one of them measuring 80 feet square. The exact nature and purpose of these buildings cannot be ascertained. They are thought to have been palaces, temples or municipal halls.

The most imposing structure in the city is the Great Bath. It consists of a large open quadrangle in the centre with galleries and rooms on all sides. In the centre of the quadrangle is a large swimming enclosure, 39 feet long, 23 feet wide and about 8 feet deep. It has a flight of steps at either end and is fed by a well

situated in one of the adjoining rooms. The water is discharged by a huge drain with a corbelled roof more than six feet in height. The Great Bath is 180 feet long and 108 feet wide, and its outer walls are about 8 feet thick. The solidity of the construction is amply borne out by the fact that it has successfully withstood the ravages of five thousand years.



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LIMESTONE STATUE. MOHENJO-DARO

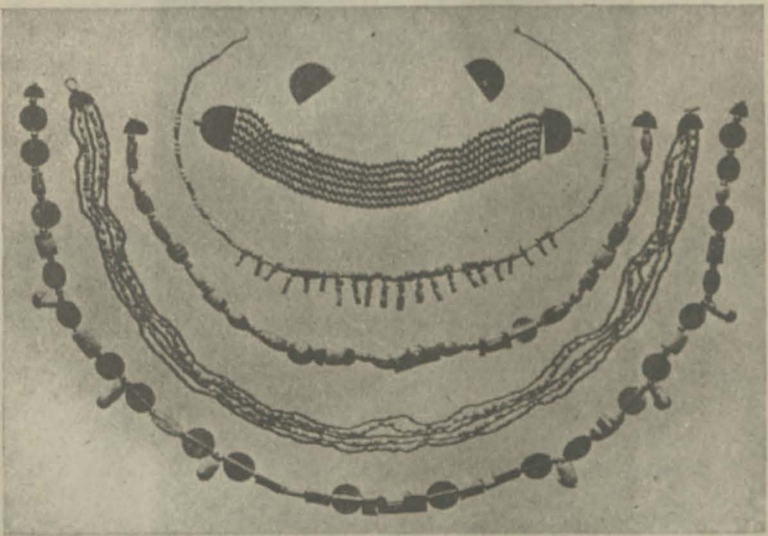
The streets of the city are wide and straight and are furnished with an elaborate drainage system together with soak-pits for sediment.

On the whole, the ruins leave no doubt that there was on this site a large, populous and flourishing town whose inhabitants freely enjoyed, to a degree unknown elsewhere in the ancient world, not only the sanitary conveniences but also the luxuries and comforts

of a highly-developed municipal life. We must also conclude that the art of building had reached a high degree of perfection.

The People

The ruins of Mohenjo-Daro tell us a great deal about the people who lived in this luxurious city, and, as they afford us the first comprehensive view of the culture and civilisation of India, we must note the essential features of the social, economic and religious condition under appropriate heads or items.



MOHENJO-DARO. JEWELLERY

Food. Wheat was the principal article of food, but barley and palm-date were also familiar. They also used mutton, pork, fish and eggs.

Dress and ornaments. Cotton fabrics were in common use, but wool was also used, evidently for warm textiles. Ornaments were worn by both men and women of all classes. Necklaces, fillets, armlets, finger-rings and bangles were worn by both men and women; and girdles, nose-studs, ear-rings and anklets by women alone. There was great variety in the shape and design of these ornaments, and some of them are of singular beauty. These ornaments were made of gold, silver, ivory, copper and both precious and semi-precious stones like jade, crystal, agate, carnelian, and *lapis lazuli*.

Household articles. The earthenware vessels, of rich variety, were made with the potter's wheel and were either plain or painted. In rare cases they were glazed. Vessels of copper, bronze, silver, and porcelain were known, though very rarely used. It is important to bear in mind that not a scrap of iron has been found, and that metal was obviously unknown.

Among other articles of domestic use may be mentioned spindles and spindle whorls made of baked earth, porcelain and shell; needles and combs, made of bone or ivory; axes, chisels, knives, sickles, fishhooks and razors made of copper and bronze; small cubical blocks of hard stone, probably used as weights.

The children's toys included, in addition to familiar articles, small wheeled carts and chairs, and we may easily infer that these were used in actual life. The discovery of dice-pieces shows the prevalence of that game.

Domesticated animals. The remains of skeletons prove that the humped bull, the buffalo, sheep, elephant and camel were domesticated. There are some doubts about the horse. The carvings of dogs on children's toys show that that animal was also familiar.

Weapons of War. These include axes, spears, daggers, maces and slings, with comparatively fewer specimens of bows and arrows. The absence of swords is significant. Shields, helmets or any other defensive armour are conspicuous by their absence. The weapons of war, all offensive in character, are usually made of copper and bronze, though a few stone implements have also been found.

Seals. More than five hundred seals have been discovered. These are made of terra cotta and small in size. Some contain fine representations of animal figures—both mythical and real—engraved on them. All of them contain a short record inscribed in a sort of pictorial writing which still remains undeciphered.

Fine Art. The representations of the animals carved on these seals often exhibit a high degree of excellence. A few stone images found at Harappā recall the finish and excellence of Greek statues and show a high degree of development in the sculptor's art.

Trade and Commerce. The seals were most probably used in connection with trade. Indeed there is abundant evidence that the people traded not only with other parts of India but also with many countries of Asia. It is certain that they secured tin, copper and precious stones from beyond India.

Arts and Crafts. Some aspects of the art and industry of the early Indus people have been dealt with above. Agriculture must

have played an important part in the daily life of the common people, and among other things wheat, barley and cotton were cultivated on a large scale. Among the industrial classes, the potter, the weaver, the carpenter, the mason, the blacksmith, the goldsmith, the jeweller, the ivory-worker and stone-cutter were the most important.

A great advance in technical knowledge is indicated by the potter's wheel, kiln-burnt brick, the boring of hard substances like carnelian, and the casting and alloy of metals. A high aesthetic sense is indicated by the beautiful designs of ornaments, the superb relief figures on seals and the execution of fine stone statues.

Religion. The objects found at Mohenjo-Daro also teach us something about the religious faiths and beliefs of the people. The



SEAL. MOHENJO-DARO
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cult of the Divine Mother seems to have been widely prevalent, and many figurines of this Mother-Goddess have come to light. This cult may not be exactly the same as the Śakti-worship of later days, but the fundamental ideas appear to be the same, viz., the belief in a female energy as the source of all creation.

Along with this, there was also a male-god who has been identified as the prototype of the God Śiva. On one particular seal, he seems to be represented as seated in the *Yoga* posture, surrounded by animals. He has three visible faces, and two horns on two sides of a tall head-dress. It is very interesting to note how this figure corresponds with, and to a certain extent explains, the later conception of Śiva. As is well known, Śiva is regarded as a *Mahāyogin*, and is styled *Paśupati* or the lord of beasts, his chief attributes being three eyes and the *Triśūla* or the trident.

Now the apparent *Yoga* posture of the figure in Mohenjo-Daro justifies the epithet *Mahāyogin*, and the figures of animals round him explain the epithet *Paśupati*. The three faces of the figure may not be unconnected with the later conception of three eyes, and the two horns with the tall head-dress might have easily given rise to the conception of a trident with three prongs.

The identification of the male-god with Siva is further strengthened by the discovery of stone pieces which look exactly like a *Śiva-liṅga*, the form in which Śiva is almost universally worshipped to-day.

In addition to the worship of Śiva and Śakti, both in human and symbolic forms, we find the prevalence of that primitive religious faith which we call animism. It means worship of stones, trees and animals in the belief that these are abodes of spirits, good or evil. A natural corollary of this faith is the worship of Nāgas, Yakshas, etc., who are embodiments of these spirits. Clear traces of all these are found at Mohenjo-Daro.

It is obvious, therefore, that modern Hinduism, which possesses all the features mentioned above, was indebted, to a great extent, to the Indus-valley culture. Indications of the existence of the *Bhakti* cult (loving devotion to a personal God), and even of some philosophical doctrine like Metempsychosis, have also been found at Mohenjo-Daro. We must therefore hold that there is an organic relationship between the ancient culture of the Indus valley and the Hinduism of to-day.

General Conclusions

The study of the Indus-valley civilisation raises several interesting problems of a general nature. In the first place it offers a striking resemblance to the ancient civilisations in Sumer and Mesopotamia proper. The developed city-life, use of the potter's wheel, kiln-burnt bricks, and vessels made of copper and bronze, and, above all, the pictorial writings, are some of the common and distinctive features of all the three civilisations of the pre-historic period. The discovery of two seals of the Mohenjo-Daro type in Elam and Mesopotamia, and of a cuneiform inscription at Mohenjo-Daro, leaves no doubt that there was intercourse between these countries. The question therefore naturally arises, were these three civilisations developed independently, or was any of them an offshoot of the other? To put the same thing in another form, did the civilisation spread from the Indus valley to the west or *vice versa*? Or are we to assume that the growth of civilisation

in the Indus valley was uninfluenced in any way by the sister-civilisations in the west?

These and connected questions cannot be answered definitely. It will suffice to say that all the alternative hypotheses mentioned above have their supporters and opponents.

The next question, and one of greater practical importance, is the relationship of the Indus-valley culture with the Vedic civilisation of the Indo-Aryans, which is usually regarded as the source from which issued all the subsequent civilisations in India. On the face of it there are striking differences between the two. The Vedic Aryans were largely rural, while the characteristic features of the Indus-valley civilisation are the amenities of a developed city life. The former probably knew of iron and defensive armour, which are totally absent in the latter. The horse played an eminent part in the Vedic civilisation, but its early existence is doubted in the Indus valley. There were also important differences in respect of religious beliefs and practices. The Vedic Aryans worshipped the cow while the Indus people reserved their veneration for bulls. Not only do the Mother-Goddess and Śiva, the chief deities of the Indus valley, play but a minor part in the early *Veda*, but the latter, according to some interpreters, definitely condemns phallic worship. The worship of images was familiar in the Indus valley, but almost unknown to the Vedic Aryans.

In view of these striking dissimilarities, the Indus-valley civilisation is usually regarded as different from and anterior to the culture of the Vedic period. This also fits in well with the generally accepted chronological scheme. For, as noted above, the Indus-valley civilisation goes back to the third millennium B.C., while the date usually assigned to the *Ṛig-Veda* does not go beyond the second millennium B.C. But some would place the Vedic civilisation before that of the Indus valley and shift the date of the *Ṛig-Veda* to a period before 3000 B.C.

The question is not indeed free from difficulties. While the points of difference would undoubtedly incline us to the view that the Indus-valley civilisation and Vedic civilisation represent two different types of culture, the arguments for the priority of the one to the other are not conclusive. The reference to iron in the *Ṛig-Veda* would have indeed been a very strong argument for relegating the Vedic civilisation to a later period, but this is at best doubtful. As regards the other points, the data are not established sufficiently well to warrant a definite conclusion. On the whole, however, the priority of the Indus-valley civilisation appears to be more probable, and at present holds the field.

Be that as it may, there is not the least doubt that we can no longer accept the view, now generally held, that Vedic civilisation is the sole foundation of all subsequent civilisations in India. That the Indus-valley civilisation described above has been a very important contributory factor to the growth and development of civilisation in this country admits of no doubt.

Lastly, there is the question of the race of the people among whom the Indus-valley civilisation grew. The preceding discussion would prepare us for some of the replies that have been given. Some hold that they were the same as the Sumerians, while others hold that they were Dravidians. Some again believe that these two were identical. According to this view, the Dravidians at one time inhabited the whole of India, including the Punjab, Sind and Baluchistān, and gradually migrated to Mesopotamia. The fact that the Dravidian language is still spoken by the Brahui people of Baluchistān is taken to lend strength to this view.

There is also a theory that the "Indus" people were Aryans, but this at present finds but few supporters. It is impossible to come to any definite conclusion on this point, and there is always the possibility that the people of the Indus valley might have belonged to an altogether separate race.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY VEDIC AGE

Early Aryan Settlements

INDIA, as is well known, derives its name from the Sindhu (Indus), and the earliest civilisation of this country of which we have any definite trace had its cradle in the valley of the same river. We have seen in the last chapter that excavations at several places in the lower part of the valley have laid bare the ruins of well-built cities, and seals surprisingly similar to those discovered at Eshnunna, Kish and Ur in Mesopotamia, and assigned by archæologists to the third millennium B.C., have been found. The identity of the originators of this early Indus culture is uncertain. They appear to have professed a religion that was iconic and laid emphasis on the worship of the Mother-Goddess and a male deity who seems to have been the prototype of Śiva. The phallic cult was prevalent, but fire-pits were conspicuous by their absence.

Far different is the picture of another civilisation which had its principal home higher up the Indus valley. The people who evolved this culture called themselves *Āryas* or Aryans. Their earliest literature makes no reference to life in stately cities comparable to those whose remains have been unearthed at Harappā and Mohenjo-Daro. Their religion was normally aniconic,[1] and in their pantheon the female element was subordinated to the male, and the place of honour was given to deities like Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, the Nāsatyas, Sūrya, Agni (Fire) and other supernal beings who seem to have been quite unknown to the originators of the "Indus" culture as described in the last chapter. Unfortunately, the early literature of this remarkable people—called the *Veda*—cannot be dated even approximately, and it is impossible to say with absolute precision in what chronological relation the civilisation portrayed in the *Veda* stood to the "Indus" culture of the third millennium B.C. Max Müller hesitatingly placed the beginning of the Vedic literature in the latter half of the second millennium B.C. Tilak and Jacobi, on the other hand, tried to push the date

[1] i.e. in which images played no part.

much farther back on astronomical grounds. But, as pointed out by several Indologists, astronomical calculations prove nothing unless the texts in question admit of unambiguous interpretation. Tilak himself points out how unsafe it is to act upon calculations based on loose statements in literature regarding the position of the heavenly bodies.

In the chaotic state of early Aryan chronology, it is a welcome relief to turn to Asia Minor and other countries in Western Asia and find in certain tablets of the fourteenth century B.C., discovered at Boghaz Keui and other places, references to kings who bore Aryan names and invoked the gods Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa and the Nāsatyas to witness and safeguard treaties. It is certain that the tablets belong to a period in the evolution of the Aryan religion when Indra, Varuṇa, and the other gods associated with them, still retained their early Vedic pre-eminence and had not yet been thrown into the shade by the Brāhmaṇic *Prajāpati* or the epic and Purāṇic *Trimūrti*.

Did the worshippers of Indra go from an earlier home in the Indus valley to Asia Minor or was the process just the reverse of this? In this connection it is interesting to note that in one passage of the *Ṛig-Veda* a worshipper invokes from his *pratna okas*, or ancient abode, the god Indra whom his ancestors formerly invoked. We are also told that Yadu and Turvaśa, two among the most famous Ṛig-Vedic tribes, were brought by Indra from a distant land. The former is in several passages brought into special relation with *Paśu* or *Parśu*, a name borne by the ancient people of Persia. The latter took part in a conflict with a king who is styled a *Pārthava*. The contest is thus described in the *Ṛig-Veda*:

> "Favouring Abhyāvartin, the son of Chayamāna, Indra destroyed the race of Varaśikha, killing the descendants of Vṛichīvat (who were stationed) on the Hariyūpīyā, on the eastern part, whilst the western (troop) was scattered through fear.
>
> "Indra, the invoked of many, thirty hundred mailed warriors (were collected) together on the Yavyāvatī, to acquire glory, but the Vṛichīvats advancing hostilely, and breaking the sacrificial vessels, went to (their own) annihilation.
>
> "He whose bright prancing horses, delighted with choice fodder, proceed between (heaven and earth) gave up Turvaśa to Sṛiñjaya, subjecting the Vṛichīvats to the descendants of Devavāta (Abhyāvartin).
>
> "The opulent supreme sovereign Abhyāvartin, the son of

Chayamāna, presents, Agni, to me two damsels riding in cars, and twenty cows: this donation of the Pārthava cannot be destroyed."

We have in the above passage an account of a great struggel in which the Turvaśas, whom Indra had brought from a distant country, apparently took part on behalf of a local folk known as the *Vṛichīvats*. The Turvaśas were abandoned by their deity, who granted victory to the Sṛiñjayas, apparently led by a prince who is styled a *Pārthava*, a name that reminds us of Irān and is comparable to *Parśu* mentioned in connection with the Yadus. If the name *Hariyūpīyā*, which is the designation of a river or a city according to the commentators, and is associated with the mysterious people called Vṛichīvats who "broke the sacrificial vessels", can be connected with Harappā, as has already been suggested by some, we have here an interesting glimpse of a period when that great centre of early Indus civilisation formed a battle-ground of fierce invaders exulting in the worship of Indra, clad in coats of mail (*varmīnaḥ*) and possessed of "prancing horses", both of which the warriors of the lower Indus culture possibly lacked.

The Indra-worshipping tribes seem to have been divided into two rival groups. One of these included the Sṛiñjayas and their allies the Bharatas, both lauded by the priestly family of the Bhāradvājas. To the other group belonged the Yadus, Turvaśas, Druhyus, Anus and Pūrus who are found frequently in alliance with indigenous tribes. The first two tribes of the second group are branded as *Dāsas* in one passage of the *Ṛig-Veda*, and of the remaining three, the Pūrus are styled *mṛidhravāchah*, "of hostile speech", an epithet otherwise applied only to the non-Aryan *Dasyus*.

Distinct from both these Indra-worshipping groups were the *Dāsas* proper or *Dasyus*, a dark-skinned, flat-nosed race who spoke a tongue unintelligible to the Aryans, possessed forts and herds of cattle coveted by the new-comers, despised the sacrificial religion of the latter and possibly worshipped the phallus. This latter characteristic connects them with the men who evolved the prehistoric civilisation of the lower Indus valley.

It may be that the folk (*jana*) of the Bharatas represents an Aryan stock altogether different from that of the Yadu group. The memory of the migration of the Bharatas is not distinctly preserved in any of the hymns, while Yadus and Turvaśas are expressly mentioned as new arrivals. In the *Ṛig-Veda* Bharata

princes are found sacrificing on the Dṛishadvatī, the Sarasvatī and the Āpayā, all rivers in the western part of the *Madhya-deśa*, far away from the north-west frontier. It is interesting to note that they are specially associated with the cult of Agni, the Fire-God, a deity conspicuous by his absence in the Boghaz Keui records of the fourteenth century B.C., and of whose worship no traces are found in the early ruins of Mohenjo-Daro.

The Bharatas were at first admittedly inferior to their foes and were "shorn of their possessions, like the staves for driving cattle, stripped of their leaves and branches: but Vasishṭha became their family priest, and the people of the Tṛitsus prospered". Tṛitsu seems to have been the name of the ruling dynasty of the Bharatas, the most famous representatives of which were Divodāsa and his son or grandson Sudās.

Opposed to the Tṛitsus and the allied tribe of the Sṛiñjayas stood the Yadus, Turvaśas, Druhyus, Anus and Pūrus. The first two tribes figure as enemies of Divodāsa, and appear to have pushed their conquest as far as the Sarayū, which may be the river of the same name in Oudh, although the possibility of its being a river in Irān cannot altogether be excluded. The Druhyus are connected by tradition with the people of Gandhāra—the Gandhāris, who are mentioned in a *Ṛig-Vedic* passage as famous for their sheep and wool, and who occupied the territory round modern Peshāwār. The Anus are closely associated with the Druhyus, while the Pūrus are found along with their enemies, the Bharatas, on the banks of the Sarasvatī, though settlements in the western Punjab are also known.

It is clear that the Bharatas and their allies did not like the idea of being permanently "shorn of their possessions" by their enemies. The result was that the two rival groups of tribes engaged in a deadly struggle with one another. In one of these contests the Sṛiñjayas scattered the forces of the Turvaśas and their allies the Vṛichīvats. In another and a more famous conflict, known as the Battle of the Ten Kings, Sudās, the Tṛitsu king, defeated the hostile tribes, who were joined on the river Parushṇī by the Śivas, Pakthas and associate tribes from the north-west. The Bharatas now definitely established their pre-eminence among the Aryan folks, and a late Vedic text—the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*—refers to an old *gāthā* which describes "the greatness of the Bharatas neither the men before nor those after them attained".

More important than the internal conflicts of the Aryans were their struggles with the non-Aryans, which gradually led to a considerable extension of the Aryan dominion towards the east.

To Divodāsa belongs the credit of fighting against a *Dāsa* chieftain named Śambara. His policy was continued by Sudās who crushed a hostile combination of indigenous tribes on the banks of the Jumnā. Under the guidance of a priest named Viśvāmitra, the Bharatas even seem to have entertained designs against the Kīkaṭas, a non-Aryan people traditionally associated with South Bihār. In the campaign against the *Dāsas*, the Bharatas were ably seconded by their rivals the Pūrus, one of whose kings bore the significant name of Trasadasyu, i.e. "terror to the Dasyus".

The geographical area eventually occupied by the Ṛig-Vedic tribes is clearly indicated by the mention of certain rivers which permit of easy identification. The most important among these are the Kubhā (Kābul), the Suvāstu (Swāt), the Krumu (Kurram), the Gomatī (Gumal), the Sindhu (Indus), the Sushomā (Sohān), he Vitastā (Jhelum), the Asiknī (Chenāb), the Marudvṛidhā (Maruwardwan), the Parushṇī (Rāvi), the Vipāś (Bias), the Śutudri (Sutlej), the Sarasvatī, the Dṛishadvatī (the Rakshi or Chitang), the Jumnā, the Gangā, and the Sarayū. The mention of these rivers implies the possession by the Aryans of a considerable portion of the country stretching from eastern Afghanistan to the upper valley of the Ganges. The major part of this area came to be known as *Sapta Sindhu*—the Land of the Seven Rivers. The whole of this extensive tract of land could not have been occupied entirely by Aryan tribes, because we hear also of the clans (*Viśaḥ*) of the *Dāsas* who must have occupied some part at least of this territory, and whose supersession in any case must have been a slow and gradual process. Moreover, vast tracts of country were still covered with forest (*araṇyānī*) or were altogether barren, containing only a few wells (*prapā*) here and there.

Political Organisation of the Rig-Vedic Aryans

The basis of the political and social organisation of the Ṛig-Vedic people was the patriarchal family. The higher units were styled *grāma*, *viś* and *jana*, and in some rare passages we even hear of aggregates of *janas*. The precise relationship between the *grāma*, the *viś* and the *jana* is nowhere distinctly stated. Sometimes the words seem to have been used almost synonymously. The Bharatas, for example, are described in one passage as *Viśaḥ* (people) of the Tṛitsus, and in another text the *jana* (folk) of the Bharatas is styled the *grāma* (horde) seeking cows. That the *grāma* was normally a smaller unit than either the *viś* or the *jana* appears

probable from the fact that the *grāmaṇī*, the leader of the *grāma* (horde or village), who is usually a *Vaiśya*, is clearly inferior to the lord of the *viś* (*viśpati*) or the protector (*gopā*) of the *jana*, who is often the king himself.

It is more difficult to say in what relationship the *viś* stood to the *jana*. In some Vedic passages there is a clear contrast between the two, and Irānian analogies seem to suggest that the *viś* is a sub-division of a *jana*, if the latter may be taken as a parallel to the Irānian *Zantu*. It is also to be noted that the Bharatas are referred to as a single *jana*, but when the word *viś* is used in reference to them, we have the plural *Viśaḥ* possibly pointing to the existence of a plurality of such units.

The prevailing form of government among the Ṛig-Vedic tribes was monarchical. But names applied in later ages to non-monarchical communities were also known. We have references to the *gaṇa* with the *gaṇapati* or *jyeshṭha* (elder) at its head. The mention of the term *jyeshṭha*, which corresponds to *jeṭṭhaka* of the Pāli texts, possibly points to some sort of organisation parallel to that of the well-known tribal republics of early Buddhist times.

The Ṛig-Vedic state (*rāshṭra*) seems, however, to have been normally ruled by a potentate styled *rājan* (king) who was "without a rival and a destroyer of rivals". Kingship was usually hereditary. Thus the Pūrus and the Tṛitsus, two among the most famous of the Ṛig-Vedic clans, had as their rulers dynasties of princes, some of whose names are recorded in the *Ṛik-Saṁhitā*. Elective monarchies were perhaps not altogether unknown, though the *Ṛig-Veda* has no clear reference to them. In the *Atharva Veda* and the Great Epic, however, we have several explicit references to the election of the *rājan* to the kingship by the people, and in the *Ṛig-Veda* itself the need of the people's approval, if sovereignty is to be steady and unvacillating, is emphasised in the consecration hymns. In addition to the title *rājan* we come across the designation *samrāṭ*, which in later times undoubtedly meant a paramount ruler. In the *Ṛig-Veda*, however, there is no trace of any terrestrial kingship of the Mauryan or Gupta type, though the idea of a universal monarch (*viśvasya bhuvanasya rājā*) is met with.

The *rājan* occupied a position of pre-eminence in the tribe. He was formally consecrated to kingship and was marked out from the commonalty by his shining robes and the splendid palace where he lived, surrounded by his officers and retainers and lauded by priests and singers.

The foremost duty of the king was the protection of the tribe and the tribal territory. He fought against external enemies.

He employed spies (*spaśa*) to watch over the conduct of the people, who were apparently punished when they went wrong. He had to maintain a body of priests who performed the sacred rites and received a contribution (*bali*) from the people. The king was assisted by a number of functionaries of whom the most important was the *Purohita* or chaplain. The *Purohita* not only gave advice to the ruler, but used his spells and charms to secure the success of his patron's arms and lauded his exploits when victory was won. Another important official was the *Senānī* or the leader of the army. About the organisation of the *Senā* or army which he led, our information is meagre. It must have included foot soldiers, later called *Patti*, as well as *Rathins* or warriors who fought from chariots. "Prancing horses" are also alluded to in certain battle songs. But the use of the elephant in war was as yet uncommon. Warriors of noble descent wore coats of mail, metal helmets, and hand-guards. The chief offensive weapon was the bow. Two kinds of arrows were used; one was poisoned and had a head of horn; the other was copper or iron-headed (*ayomukham*). Spears, swords and axes are also mentioned. We have also reference to the *pur charishṇu* or moving fort which may have been an engine for assaulting strongholds. Banners were used in war, and musical instruments are mentioned. The army may have been divided into units termed *śardha*, *vrāta* and *gaṇa*, but the matter is obscure. *Kulapas* or heads of families fought under the banner of the *Vrājapati*, who is sometimes identified with the *Grāmanī*. The latter functionary was probably the head of the village both for civil and military purposes. Forts or strongholds were under the *Pūrpati*. The Vedic king had a system of espionage and also employed *dūtas* or messengers.

The *rājan*, though the lord of the people, did not govern without their consent. The business of the tribe was carried out in a popular assembly styled *Samiti*, at which princes and people were alike present. We have also references to another body, termed *Sabhā*, which some regard as a Council of Elders. Others think it was a village assembly or the place of meeting which also served as a centre for social gatherings. Certain passages of the *Ṛig-Veda* seem to connect the *Sabhā* with the men of wealth, opulence and goodly form, and this lends countenance to the view that in the main it functioned as a Council of Elders rather than an assembly of the whole tribe. Women at any rate were, according to a later Vedic text, excluded from the *Sabhā*. The *Sabhā* gave decisions regarding matters of public moment and, in later literature, figures prominently in connection with the administration of justice.

Social Life

It has already been stated that the foundation of the political and social structure in the Ṛig-Vedic age was the family. The members of a family lived in the same house. Houses in this age were presumably built of wood or reed. In every house there was a fireplace (*agniśālā*), besides a sitting-room and apartments for the ladies. The master of the house was called *gṛihapati* or *dampati*. He was usually kind and affectionate, but occasional acts of cruelty are recorded. Thus we have the story of a father who blinded his son for his extravagance.

Families being patrilineal, people prayed for abundance of sons. The birth of daughters was not desired, but once born they were treated with kindness and consideration. Their education was not neglected, and some of them lived to compose hymns and rise to the rank of seers like Viśavārā, Ghoshā and Apālā. Girls were given in marriage when they attained full development. Marriage for love as well as for money was known. Weddings were celebrated in the house of the bride's parents. Ordinarily a man married but one wife. Polygamy was, however, practised, but not polyandry. Remarriage of widows was permitted. Women were not independent persons in the eye of the law, and had to look to their male relations for aid and support. Their position in the household was one of honour. The term *dampati* is sometimes used to designate the mistress as well as the master of the house. The wife participated in the religious offerings of the husband and was the queen of his home. There is no evidence in the *Ṛig-Veda* of the seclusion of women, and ladies trooped to festal gatherings "decked, shining forth with sunbeams".

Particular attention was paid to dress and adornment. The Vedic costume seems to have consisted of three parts—an under-garment styled *nīvi*, a garment called *vāsa* or *paridhāna* and a mantle styled *adhivāsa*, *atka* or *drāpi*. The clothes were of different hues and were made of cotton, deer skin or wool. Garments were often embroidered with gold. The use of gold ornaments and of floral wreaths was common, especially on festive occasions. Both the sexes wore turbans. The hair was worn long and combed. The long locks of women were folded in broad plaits.

The daily fare of the Vedic household consisted mainly of parched grain, cakes (*apūpa*), milk and its various products such as curd and butter, and many sorts of vegetables and fruits. The use of animal food was common, especially at the great feasts and family gatherings. The slaying of the cow was, however, gradually

looked upon with disfavour as is apparent from the name *aghnyā* (not to be killed) applied to it in several passages. Curiously enough, we have no reference to the use of salt in the *Ṛig-Veda*.

Drinking water was obtained not only from rivers and springs (*utsa*), but also from *avatas* or artificial wells from which it was raised by a wheel of stone and poured into buckets of wood. Reference is also made to more exhilarating drinks such as *Soma* and *Surā*. The former was the juice of a famous plant that grew on mountains, especially on the *Mūjavat* peak of the Himālayas. It was identical with the *Haoma* of the *Avesta*. Its use was restricted to religious ceremonies. On the other hand *Surā* was an ordinary intoxicating drink, the use of which was condemned in later ages.

The favourite amusements of the more virile classes were racing, hunting and the war-dance. The chariot-race was extremely popular and formed an important element of the sacrifice celebrated in later times as the *Vājapeya*. No less popular was hunting. The animals hunted were the lion, the elephant, the wild boar, the buffalo, and deer. Birds also were hunted. Another favourite pastime was dicing, which frequently entailed considerable loss to the gamester. Among other amusements, mention may be made of boxing, dancing and music. Women in particular loved to display their skill in dancing and singing to the accompaniment of lutes and cymbals. Lute-players played an important part in the development of the epic in later ages.

The Vedic singers loved to dwell on the joys of life and seldom referred to death except in the case of enemies. When a man died, he was either cremated or buried. The burning of widows does not appear to have been prevalent.

The Vedic *Kulas* or families were grouped into larger units in the formation of which *Varṇa* (colour) and *Sājātya* (kinship) played an important part. From the beginning, the white-hued (*śvitnya*) Aryan invaders were marked out from their dark-skinned opponents, who were called *dāsa*, *dasyu* or *śūdra*. In the Aryan community itself men of kingly family (*rājanya* or *kshatra*) and descendants of priests (*Brāhmaṇas*) were clearly distinguished from the common free men, the *viś*. The quadruple division of society is mentioned in some of the earlier hymns, but it makes its formal appearance in the *Purushasūkta* which seeks to explain the existing divisions by adumbrating the theory that "when they divided the primeval being (*Purusa*) the *Brāhmaṇa* was his mouth, the *Rājanya* became his arms, the *Vaiśya* was his thighs, and from his feet sprang the *Śūdras*".

The social divisions mentioned here have their parallel in other Indo-European communities. But it is important to remember that in the hymns of the *Ṛig-Veda* there is little trace of the rigid restrictions typical of caste in its mature form. There was hardly any taboo on intermarriage, change of occupation or commensality. We have instances of marriages of *Brāhmaṇas* with *Rājanya* women, and of the union of *Ārya* and *Śūdra*. Families were not wedded to a particular profession. "I am," says the author of a hymn, "a poet, my father is a doctor, and my mother is a grinder of corn. With our different views, seeking after gain, we run, as after cattle." There was no ban on the taking of food cooked by the *Śūdras*, and there is no evidence that impurity was communicated by the touch or contact of the inferior castes.

The rigid restrictions with regard to occupation, commensality, etc., originated, according to recent writers, not with the Aryans but with the totemistic proto-Australoid and the Austro-Asiatic inhabitants of pre-Dravidian India who dreaded the magical effects of the practice of strange crafts and the taking of tabooed food A taboo on intermarriage is also traced to a similar source. The Aryan invader, with his ideas about colour and hypergamy, simply crystallised and perpetuated a system which was already in existence and was based on the taboo arising from magical ideas. Other factors, geographical, economic, and religious, have had their share in later developments.

In later ages, a member of each of the three higher castes, who wished to lead an ideal life, had to pass through the rigorous discipline of the *Āśramas* or the four stages of life. First he was a *brahmachārin* or Vedic student vowed to chastity, then a *gṛihastha* or married householder, next a *vānaprastha* or forest hermit, and finally a *sannyāsin*, that is, an ascetic who had renounced the world. The germ of the system of *Āśrama* is already met with in the Vedic hymns. Besides the *gṛihapati*, we have reference to the *brahmachārin* as well as the *muni*. The *brahmachārin* practised self-restraint and studied the sacred lore. "The master recited the texts and the disciple repeated them after him as frogs croak one after another." The *munis* are described as "long-haired, some were wind-clad, others wore a soiled garment of brown colour and led a life of wandering".

Economic Life

The Ṛig-Vedic Aryans were mostly scattered in villages. The word *nagara* (city) does not occur in the hymns. We find indeed mention of *purs* which were occasionally of considerable size and

were sometimes made of stone (*aśmamayī*) or of iron (*āyasī*). Some were furnished with a hundred walls (*śatabhuji*). But the *purs* were in all probability rather ramparts or forts than cities, and served as places of refuge, particularly in autumn, as is suggested by the epithet *Śāradī* applied to them in some passages. It is significant that, unlike the later texts, the *Ṛig-Veda* makes no clear mention of individual cities like Āsandīvat or Kāmpila.

Regarding the organisation of the village we have a few details. There was an official styled the *Grāmaṇī* who looked after the affairs of the village, both civil and military. We have also reference to a functionary called *Vrājapati* who may have been identical with the *Grāmaṇī*, and who led to battle the various *Kulapas* or heads of families.

Homestead and arable lands in the village appear to have been owned by individuals or families, while grass lands (*khilya*) were probably held in common.

Agriculture was the principal occupation of the village folk. The importance of the art of tilling is clearly brought out by the name *Kṛishṭi* or *Charshaṇi* (agriculturist) which is applied to people in general, and in particular to the five principal tribes into which the early Vedic community was divided. Cultivated fields were known as *Urvarā* or *Kshetra*. They were often watered by irrigation canals. The use of manure was also known. The grain grown on the soil was styled *dhāna* or *yava*, but the exact significance of these terms in the earliest literature is not known. In later times they meant rice and barley. When ripe, they were cut with a sickle, tied in bundles and threshed on the floor of the granary. They were next winnowed, ground in the mill and made into cakes (*apūpa*).

The rearing of cattle and other domestic animals was scarcely less important than agriculture. Cows were held in much esteem, and milk, as we have seen, formed an important part of the dietary in the Vedic household. Herds of cattle were daily led to the pasture by the *gopa* (cowherd). The valley of the *Yamunā* was especially famous for its wealth of kine. The marking of the ears of cattle was a common practice, as is shown by the use of the expression *ashṭakarṇī* (having pierced ears or having the sign of 8 marked on the ear) to mean a cow.

Other useful animals were the draught-ox, the horse, the dog, the goat and the sheep. The ewes of the land of Gandhāra were famous for their wool.

Though mainly an agricultural and pastoral people, the Vedic tribes were not indifferent to trade and industry. Commerce

was largely in the hands of a people styled *Paṇi*, who were probably non-Aryans and whose niggardliness was proverbial, but amongst them we have reference also to bountiful merchants like Bṛibu. Trade probably consisted mainly of barter. The chief articles of trade, judging by the evidence of the later *Saṁhitās*, were clothes, coverlets and skins. The standard unit of value was the cow, but necklets of gold (*nishka*) also served as a means of exchange. Whether *nishkas* in the early period possessed all the characteristic marks of a regular coinage, is a highly debatable question. No gold coin of the old indigenous type has yet been discovered in India, but the transition to the use of coined money was clearly prepared by the *nishka*, which was a piece of metal that came to possess a definite weight, if not the hall-mark of State authority. We have also in the *Ṛig-Veda*, in an enumeration of gifts, reference to the golden *manā* which some authorities identify with the old Babylonian weight-unit, the *manah* (Latin *Mina*).

The principal means of transport by land were chariots (*ratha*) and wagons (*anas*), the former usually drawn by horses and the latter by oxen. The epithet *pathi-krit*, "path-maker", applied to the Fire-God, suggests that the services of the deity were frequently requisitioned to burn the primeval forests, infested by wild animals and haunted by highwaymen (*taskara*, *stena*), to make roads for the use of travellers and merchants.

A great controversy has centred round the question as to whether marine navigation was practised in Ṛig-Vedic times. According to one view, navigation was limited to the crossing of rivers in boats, but we have undoubted references to navigators sailing in ships with a hundred oars. In the story of the ship-wreck of Bhujyu, mention is made of the *Samudra*, "which giveth no support, or hold, or station". Some think that *Samudra* means no more than the stream of the Indus in its lower course. Others regard the story as a matter of hearsay knowledge gathered from travellers, but acquaintance with the sea is rendered probable by references to the "treasures of the deep". If the identification of the Vedic *manā* with the Babylonian *manah* is correct, we have indubitable testimony to a very early intercourse between Vedic India and distant lands beyond the seas.

Of the industries of the Ṛig-Vedic period, those of the wood-worker, the metal-worker, the tanner, the weaver and the potter deserve special mention. The wood-worker or carpenter not only made chariots, wagons, houses and boats, but showed his skill in carved work of a finer type such as artistic cups. The metal-worker or smith fashioned all sorts of weapons, implements and

ornaments from various kinds of metal including gold and the mysterious *ayas*, which some authorities take to mean copper or bronze while others favour the sense of iron. Workers in leather made water-casks, bow-strings, slings and hand-guards for the protection of the archers. Weavers included men as well as women. The latter showed their skill in sewing, weaving and the plaiting of mats from grass or reeds. The potter (*Kulāla*) also plied his craft for the benefit of the people.

Arts and Sciences

The art of poetry was in full bloom as is evidenced by the splendid collection of lyrics known as the *Ṛik-Saṁhitā* which consists of hymns in praise of different gods. The number of hymns is 1,017. These are grouped into books termed *ashṭakas* or *maṇḍalas* containing eight and ten hymns respectively, which were recited by priests styled *hotṛis* or reciters. The old hymns are chiefly to be found in the so-called Family Books (II–VII), each of which is ascribed by tradition to a particular family of seers (*ṛishis*). Their names are Gṛitsamada, Viśvāmitra, Vāmadeva, Atri, Bharadvāja and Vasishṭha. Book VIII is ascribed to the Kanvas and Angirases. Book IX is dedicated to *Soma*. The latest parts of the collection are to be found in Books I and X, which, however, contain some old hymns as well.

Fine specimens of lyric poetry are to be found among the Ṛig-Vedic hymns, notably in those addressed to the Goddess of the Dawn.

> "The radiant Dawns have risen up for glory, in their white splendour like the waves of waters.
> She maketh paths all easy, fair to travel and rich, hath shown herself benign and friendly.
> We see that thou art good: far shines thy lustre; thy beams, thy splendours have flown up to heaven.
> Decking thyself, thou makest bare thy bosom, shining in majesty, thou Goddess Morning."

A knowledge of the art of writing has been deduced from references to *ashṭakarṇī* cows, where the epithet *ashṭa-karṇī* is interpreted to mean "having the sign for the number 8 marked on the ear". But the expression admits of other interpretations. The prevailing view has been that the Ṛig-Vedic people did not possess the art of writing, and that the old script in which the

inscriptions of Aśoka and his successors are written goes back to a Semitic, and not Vedic Aryan, origin. Writing was no doubt practised by the pre-historic people of the Indus valley who developed the ancient culture of Harappā and Mohenjo-Daro, but it is significant that the early literature of the Aryans was transmitted orally.

Architecture made some advance in Ṛig-Vedic India. There are references to mansions supported by a thousand columns and provided with a thousand doors. Mention is also made of stone castles and structures with a hundred walls. Allusions to images of Indra possibly point, according to some, to the beginnings of sculpture.

The medical art of the age distinguished quite a number of diseases. But the physician (*bhishaj*) was still a fiend-slayer as well as a healer of disease, and charms and spells were regarded as equally efficacious with healing herbs and drugs. The use of iron legs as a substitute for natural ones points, however, to some advance in surgery. The science of astronomy made definite progress, and certain stars had already been observed and named.

Religion

The early Vedic religion has been designated by the name of henotheism or kathenotheism—a belief in single gods, each in turn standing out as the highest. It has also been described as the worship of Nature leading up to Nature's God. The chief deities of the earlier books owe their origin to the personification of natural phenomena. Abstract deities like *Dhātṛi*, the Establisher; *Vidhātṛi*, the Ordainer; *Viśvakarman*, the All-Creating, and *Prajāpati*, the Lord of Creatures, *Śraddhā*, Faith; *Manyu*, Wrath, make their appearance at a later stage. Besides the higher Gods, lauded by priests, we have reference to others whose worship was not countenanced in orthodox circles. Some scholars find in the hymns traces of the cult of the *liṅga*, and even of Kṛishṇa. Mention is made in this connection of the *Śiśnadevas*, "worshippers of the phallus", the *Śivas* who opposed the Indra-worshipping Tṛitsus, and a foe of Indra named Kṛishṇa who lived on the banks of the Aṁśumatī. But *Śiśnadeva* is taken by some to mean simply "incontinent". The Śiva opponents of the Tṛitsus appear to have been a tribe, not a religious sect, and Śiva occurs as an epithet of the god Rudra worshipped by the Vedic priests. The Krishṇa mentioned in Ṛig-Vedic hymns can hardly be identified with his epic and Purāṇic namesake, as the river with which he is

associated in the *Ṛig-Veda* is not the Jumnā but some stream in the Kuru country, as we learn from the *Bṛihaddevatā*.

Father *Dyaus* (Zeus, Diespiter), the Shining God of Heaven, and Mother *Pṛithivī*, the Earth Goddess, are among the oldest of the Vedic deities, but the hymns scarcely reflect their former greatness. They have been cast into the shade by *Varuṇa*, the Encompassing Sky, and Indra, the God of Thunder and Rain. Varuṇa is the most sublime deity of the early Vedic pantheon. He bears the epithet *Asura* (Avestan *Ahura*) and he is the great upholder of physical and moral order, *Ṛita*, the idea of which is at least as old as the fourteenth century B.C., as we learn from inscriptions mentioning the names of the Mitanni kings. To Varuṇa people turned for forgiveness of sin just as they did to Vishṇu in a later age.

> "If we have sinned against the man who loves us, have ever wronged a brother, friend, comrade,
> The neighbour ever with us, or a stranger, O Varuṇa, remove from us the trespass.
>
> "O Varuṇa, whatever the offence may be which we as men commit against the heavenly host,
> When through our want of strength we violate thy laws, punish us not, O God, for that iniquity."

The worship of Varuṇa, with its consciousness of sin and trust in the divine forgiveness, is undoubtedly one of the first roots of the later doctrine of *Bhakti*.

If Varuṇa is the sovereign of the Universe and the guardian of the moral laws, Indra is the puissant God of war, the lightning-wielder, who

> ". . . slew the serpent, then discharged the waters,
> And cleft the caverns of the lofty mountains",
> ". . . made all earthly things unstable,
> Who humbled and dispersed the Dāsa colour,
> Who, as the player's stake the winning gambler,
> The foemen's fortune gains. . . ."

Indra came to occupy the chief place among the Vedic gods, while Varuṇa receded to the background and became merely the Lord of Waters, a sort of Indian Neptune.

Closely connected with Varuṇa is Mitra, the friend, the personification of the sun's beneficent agency, and the two belonged to the class of deities styled *Āditya*, sons of Aditi, the Goddess of

Eternity. Other important deities of the upper realm of light are *Sūrya*, the Illuminator; *Savitṛi*, the Enlivener; *Pūshan*, the Nourisher; *Vishṇu Urukrama*, the wide-striding Sun; the *Aśvins* or the *Nāsatyas*, perhaps the Morning and Evening Stars, later the gods of healing, parallel to the *Dioscuri*; and *Ushas*, the lovely Goddess of the Dawn.

Between the world of light above and the earth below lies the realm of the air, and the chief deities of this region are, besides Indra, the *Maruts* (Storm Gods), *Vāyu* and *Vāta* (the Wind Gods), *Rudra* (the Howling God of Storm and Lightning), and *Parjanya* (the God of Rain). Of the terrestrial deities, the chief are Agni, Soma and Sarasvatī. *Agni*, or the Fire-God, received special homage because no sacrifice could be performed without offerings to him. The libation of *Soma* was also regarded as specially sacred. *Sarasvatī* was a river deity who came to be regarded later as the Goddess of Learning. Of the three principal deities of the later mythology, Vishṇu and Rudra (Śiva) are, as we have seen already, known to the *Ṛig-Veda*, and Brahmā, though not explicitly mentioned, has his precursors in Vidhātṛi (the Ordainer), Hiraṇyagarbha (the Germ of Gold), Prajāpati (the Lord of Creatures) and Brahmanaspati (the Lord of Prayer).

An important characteristic of Vedic Mythology is the predominance of the male element. Goddesses like Pṛithivī, Aditi, Ushas, and Sarasvatī occupy a very subordinate position. In this respect the Vedic civilisation presents a contrast to the prehistoric culture of the Indus valley, where the Mother Goddess is co-equal with her male partner.

Another important feature of the Vedic religion is the tendency towards monotheism and even monism. The hymns foreshadow the idea of universal unity, and express the belief that God is One although he bears many names.

> "They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa,
> And Agni; he is the heavenly bird Garutmat:
> To what is One, the poets give many a name,
> They call it Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan."

The monotheistic conception appears more prominently in the hymns addressed to Hiraṇyagarbha (the Gold Germ), and to Viśvakarman (the All-Creating),

> "Who is our Father, our Creator, Maker,
> Who every place doth know and every creature,

> By Whom alone to gods their names were given,
> To Him all other creatures go, to ask Him."

Finally, we have a song of Creation according to which in the beginning

> ". . . neither death nor deathlessness existed;
> Of day and night there was yet no distinction.
> Alone that One breathed calmly, self-supported,
> Other than It was none, nor aught above It."

Sacrifices occupy a prominent place in the Vedic ritual. These include offerings of milk, grain, *ghee*, flesh and juice of the Soma plant. The use of material objects as symbols of deities was perhaps not altogether unknown, and one passage apparently makes a reference to an image or symbol of Indra. The symbol of phallic worship is, as we have seen, detected by some in the allusions to the *Śiśnadevas*.

Regarding life after death, the Ṛig-Vedic hymns have no consistent theory. According to some passages, the dead dwell in the realm of Yama, the beneficent king of the departed. The idea of metempsychosis is, however, not yet developed.

CHAPTER IV

LATER VEDIC CIVILISATION

Aryan Expansion

We have seen that in the Ṛig-Vedic period the Aryan tribes had spread over the whole country from the Kābul to the upper Ganges, and had built up small kingdoms mostly under hereditary monarchs who held their own against the non-Aryan peoples by whom they were surrounded. But internecine strife in which some of the tribes engaged even in Ṛig-Vedic times produced far-reaching results. Some of the weaker tribes were absorbed by their more powerful neighbours, and the increase in the wealth and territory of the conquering tribes was reflected in the growth of the power of the kings, who governed large and compact kingdoms. Stately cities made their appearance for the first time in the later Vedic texts.

Simultaneously with the growth of large kingdoms, we have a further extension of the political and cultural sway of the Aryans towards the east and the south. This was due as much to the adventurous spirit of kings and princes as to the desire of the priests to cause *Agni*, the Fire-God, to taste new lands through sacrifices. Before the close of the later Vedic period, the Aryans had thoroughly subdued the fertile plains watered by the Jumnā, the upper Ganges and the *Sadānīrā* (the Rāptī or the Gaṇḍak). Adventurous bands penetrated into the Vindhyan forest and established powerful kingdoms in the Deccan to the north of the Godāvarī.

The centre of the Aryan world was the "firm middle country" (*dhruvā madhyamā diś*) stretching from the Sarasvatī to the Gangetic Doāb and occupied by the Kurus, the Pañchālas and some adjoining tribes. It was from this region that Brāhmaṇical civilisation spread to the outer provinces, to the land of the Kosalas and the Kāsis drained by the *Sarayū* and the *Varaṇāvatī*, to the swamps east of the Gaṇḍak colonised by the Videhas, and to the valley of the Wardha occupied by the Vidarbhas. Beyond them lived the tribes of mixed origin like the Aṅgas of East Bihār and the

Magadhas of South Bihār, as well as *Dasyus* or aboriginal folk like the Puṇḍras of North Bengal, the Pulindas and Śavaras of the Vindhyan forest, and the Andhras in the valley of the Godāvarī.

The most distinguished among the tribes of the period were at first the Kurus and the Pañchālas with their capitals at Āsandīvat and Kāmpila (Kāmpilya) respectively. The former occupied Kurukshetra—the tongue of land between the Sarasvatī and the Dṛishadvatī (Chitang-Rakshi)—as well as the districts of Delhi and Meerut. The latter occupied the Bareilly, Budāūn and Farrukhābād districts of the United Provinces and some adjoining tracts. The Kuru nation was probably formed by the amalgamation of several smaller tribes including a section of the Pūrus and the Bharatas, while the Pañchālas sprang from an obscure Ṛig-Vedic tribe known as the Krivis, with whom were associated the Sṛiñjayas and the Turvaśas.

The later Vedic texts mention powerful Kuru kings like Balhika-Pratipīya, Parikshit and Janamejaya, all of whom figure prominently in epic legends. Parikshit is the hero of a famous song of praise found in the *Atharva Veda*. It describes him as a universal king (*rājā viśvajanīna*) and his kingdom as flowing with milk and honey. His son Janamejaya is credited with having gone round the earth, completely conquering on every side. His successors were not so powerful as he was. They sustained disasters and were finally obliged to fly from Kurukshetra. According to later tradition a scion of the Kuru race transferred his residence to Kauśāmbī (Kosam, near Allahābād) and ruled over a powerful kingdom which survived till the rise of Buddhism.

The Pañchālas also produced conquering kings who engaged in wars and alliances with the Kurus. But their chief title to fame rests on their land being the home of theologians and philosophers like king Pravāhana-Jaivali and the sages Āruṇi and Śvetaketu.

In the time of the Upanishads the fame of the land of the Pañchālas as a centre of Brāhmaṇical learning was eclipsed by the country of the Videhas, whose king Janaka, the patron of Yājñavalkya, won the proud title of *Samrāṭ*. He gathered the celebrities of the Kuru-Pañchāla countries at his court "much as the intellects of Athens gathered at the Court of Macedonian princes". The Videhan monarchy fell shortly before the rise of Buddhism, and its overthrow was followed by the rise of the Vajjian Confederacy.

Growth of Royal Power and Elaboration of the Administrative Machinery

The amalgamation of tribes and the increase in the size of kingdoms in the later Vedic age, coupled with the successful leadership of the kings in war, inevitably led to a growth in the royal power. Kings now claimed to be absolute masters of all their subjects, excepting perhaps the Brāhmaṇas who proclaimed Soma to be their king. But even the Brāhmaṇas were "liable to removal at will". The common free men had to pay tribute (*bali*, *śulka* and *bhāga*) and could be "oppressed at will", while the members of the servile classes were liable to be "expelled and slain at will".

The chief functions of the king were of a military and judicial character. He was the protector of his people and the laws, and the destroyer of their enemies. Himself immune from punishment, he wielded the rod of chastisement (*daṇḍa*).

Successful monarchs set up claims to the rank of universal king (*rājā viśvajanīna*), lord of all the earth (*sarvabhūmi*) or sole ruler (*ekarāṭ*) of the land down to the seas, and celebrated sacrifices befitting their status like the *Rājasūya* (royal consecration), the *Vājapeya* (drink of strength) and *Aśvamedha* (horse-sacrifice). The *Rājasūya* included offerings to divinities in the houses of officials, styled *ratnins*, and a formal *abhisheka* or besprinkling by the priest, besides certain popular rites such as a cow raid, a sham fight and a game of dice in which the king is made to be the victor. The most interesting feature of the *Vājapeya* rites was a chariot-race in which the sacrificer was allowed to carry off the palm. This was followed by homage to Mother Earth and a formal enthronement. In the *Aśvamedha* ceremonial, a horse was set free to roam abroad under the guardianship of youths of rank who were fully armed. If the period of wandering were successfully passed, the steed was sacrificed. The features of the rite included a circle of tales narrated by a priest, and laudatory verses sung by a lute-player.

While the kings of the middle country were generally content with the title of *rājā*, rulers in the outlying parts of India preferred other designations. The eastern kings were styled *Samrāṭ*, the southerners *Bhoja*, those in the west *Svarāṭ*, while the rulers of the northern realms (*janapadas*) were called *Virāṭ*. The association of the *Samrāṭ*, whose status was now regarded as higher than that of the *rājan*, with the east is important. It probably points to the growth of imperialism in the east—a tendency that became more marked in the early days of Buddhism.

The king was usually, though not invariably, a Kshatriya. The office of monarch now, as before, was normally hereditary, though cases of election by the people were probably not rare, as is apparent from the coronation songs of the *Atharva Veda*. But popular choice seems to have been generally limited to members of the royal family.

The royal claim to absolutism did not pass unchallenged. The ceremonial of consecration included certain rites which required the king to descend from the throne and make obeisance to the Brāhmaṇas. He had also to take an oath not to play false to the priest, and was specially charged with the duty of protecting the Brāhmaṇas and the laws of the realm. That the Brāhmaṇas did not tamely acquiesce in all that the king did, appears from several stories about the conflict of kings and Brāhmaṇas recorded in the later Vedic texts. As to the commonalty, they supplied important officials like the *Sūta* and the *Grāmaṇī*, whose title *rājā kartṛi* or "king-maker" indicated their importance in the body politic. The popular assemblies styled the *Sabhā* and the *Samiti* were still regarded as important, and it is stated in the *Atharva Veda* that concord between the king and the assembly was essential for the former's prosperity. Popular wrath vented itself in the expulsion of tyrannical kings together with erring officials.

With the growth of royal power came an elaboration of the machinery of administration. In the Ṛig-Vedic period we have, barring the *Purohita* (chaplain), scarcely any reference to a purely civil functionary among the higher officials of the king. But in the later Vedic texts we come across the *Samgrahitṛi* (treasurer), the *Bhāgadugha* (collector of taxes), the *Sūta* (royal herald, bard or charioteer), the *Kshattṛi* (Chamberlain), the *Akshāvāpa* (superintendent of gambling), the *Go-vikartana* (king's companion in the chase), the *Pālāgala* (courier), in addition to the older ecclesiastical and military officials like the *Purohita* (chaplain), the *Senānī* (general) and the *Grāmaṇī* (leader of the host or of the village). Mention is also made of the generic title *Sachiva* applied to ministers in later ages. The references to the *Samgrahitṛi* and the *Bhāgadugha*, coupled with the mention of regular contributions from the people in the shape of *bali* and *śulka*, point to important developments in the system of taxation and revenue administration.

The beginnings of a regular system of provincial government may be traced in references to the *Sthapati* and the *Śatapati*. The former was apparently charged with the duty of administering outlying areas often inhabited by aboriginal tribes, while the latter probably looked after a group of a hundred villages and was

the precursor of the long chain of rural officials mentioned in the law-books. On the lowest rung of the ladder stood the village officials (*adhikṛita*) appointed by the king himself according to the *Praśna Upanishad*. Regarding police arrangements, we know very little. Some find a reference to police officials in the *Jīvagribh* of the Ṛig-Veda and the *Ugras* of the Upanishads. But the matter is not free from doubt.

The king had a very large part in the administration of justice, but power was sometimes delegated to *Adhyakshas* or overseers. Certain cases were referred to the tribe for adjudication. The judicial work of the tribal assembly was usually entrusted to a small body of *Sabhāsads* or assessors. Petty cases in the village were decided by the *Grāmyavādin* or village judge and his court (*Sabhā*). The use of Ordeal as a part of judicial procedure was not unknown. Civil cases were sometimes decided by arbitration, and private vengeance in criminal cases was still recognised.

Social Changes

Little change can be traced in the mode of house-building and the style of dress. In regard to dietary, the eating of meat was being looked upon with disfavour. New forms of social entertainment had come into existence. We have references to the *Śailūsha* or actor, and *gāthās* or verses were sung by the lute-players (*vīṇāgāthin*) at great public festivals to the accompaniment of musical instruments which were sometimes furnished with a hundred strings (*śata-tantu*). Such *gāthās* foreshadow the "songs of victory" which developed into the Great Epic.

In regard to the position of women, there was hardly any improvement. Daughters were regarded as a source of misery. Women could not go to the tribal council or assembly (*Sabhā*), neither could they take an inheritance. Married women of the upper classes had often to suffer the presence of rival wives. The lot of queens was specially unenviable in this respect. While some of them, e.g. the *mahishī* or chief queen, and the *vāvātā* or the favourite, were loved and honoured, others like the *parivrikti* were admittedly neglected. But they continued to have their share in religious rites. The education which some of them received was of a high order, as it enabled them to take a prominent part in philosophical disputations at royal courts. The rules of marriage underwent a change towards greater rigidity, and there were instances of child marriage.

As regards class distinction, changes of far-reaching importance

were taking place. The two higher classes, namely the Brāhmaṇa and the Kshatriya, enjoyed privileges denied to the Vaiśya and the Śūdra. The latter could be "oppressed at will". Different modes of address were laid down for the four castes. Change of caste was becoming difficult, if not impossible, but the higher classes were still free to intermarry with the lower orders, though marriage with Śūdras was not much approved. The life of a member of the higher castes was now rigidly regulated. The *Chāndogya Upanishad* makes pointed reference to three stages, that of the householder engaged in sacrifice, study and charity, that of the hermit who practised austerity, and that of the Brahmachārin who dwelt with his *Āchārya* or teacher. The power and prestige of the Brāhmaṇas had increased immensely. But though the priest claimed to be a god on earth and the protector of the realm, and the same individual might be the *Purohita* of several kingdoms, there was no pope to oppose the king. The Brāhmaṇa claim to supremacy was now and then contested by the Kshatriya, and we have declarations to the effect that the Kshatriya had no superior and that the priest was only a follower of the king. The great community of ordinary freemen was splitting up into small functional groups and we have references, in addition to those engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits, to the merchant, the chariot-maker, the smith, the carpenter, the tanner, the fisherman, etc., as names of distinct castes. Some of them were sinking in social estimation, and in a Brāhmaṇa passage a carpenter's touch is said to impart ceremonial impurity. The Śūdra, too, was regarded as impure and was not allowed to touch the milk needed for oblations to the Fire-God. The gulf separating him from the humbler freeman was, however, becoming narrower. He was not infrequently grouped with the Vaiśya, and the two together were set against the priest and the noble. The right of the Śūdra to live and prosper was gradually recognised and prayers were even uttered for his glory. The ranks of Śūdras were constantly swelled by the admission of new aboriginal tribes into the Aryan polity.

Outside the regular castes stood two important bodies of men, namely, the *Vrātyas* and the *Nishādas*. The *Vrātyas* were probably Aryans outside the pale of Brāhmaṇism. They did not observe Brāhmaṇic rules, spoke some Prākritic language and led a nomadic life. They appear to have had some special connection with the people of Magadha and the cult of Śiva and of the "Arhats". They were permitted to become members of the Brāhmaṇical community by the performance of some prescribed rites.

The *Nishādas* were clearly a non-Aryan people who lived in their own villages and had their own rulers (*Sthapati*). They were probably identical with the modern Bhīls.

Economic Condition

The people, including even men of wealth (*ibhyas*), still lived mostly in villages, but the amenities of city life were no longer unknown. In certain villages peasant proprietors, working in their own fields, were being replaced by a class of landlords who obtained possession of entire villages. Transfer of land, however, did not meet with popular approval during this epoch, and allotments could only be made with the consent of clansmen.

Agriculture continued to be one of the principal occupations of the people. Considerable improvement was effected in agricultural implements, and new kinds of grain and fruit trees were grown on the soil. But the cultivator was not free from trouble, and an *Upanishad* passage refers to a hailstorm or a swarm of locusts that sadly afflicted the land of the Kurus and forced many people to leave the country. Trade and industry flourished. A class of hereditary merchants (*vāṇija*) came into being. There was inland trade with the Kirātas inhabiting the mountains, who apparently exchanged the drugs which they dug up on the high ridges for clothes, mattresses, and skins. The sea was known intimately, and the mention of the legend of the flood in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* is taken by some authorities to point to intercourse with Babylon. Commerce was facilitated by the use of convenient units of value like the *nishka*, the *śatamāna*, and the *kṛishṇala*, but it is doubtful if these had acquired all the characteristics of a regular coinage. The *nishka*, formerly a necklet, was now probably a lump of gold possessing a definite weight which was equal to three hundred and twenty *ratis*, which was also the weight of a *śatamāna*. A *kṛishṇala* weighed one *rati*, that is, 1·8 grains. Merchants were probably organised into guilds, as appears from references to *gaṇas* or corporations and the *śreshṭhins* or aldermen.

The variety of industrial occupations was remarkable. Specialisation had gone far. The chariot-maker was distinguished from the carpenter, the maker of the bows from the maker of the bow-strings and of arrows, the tanner from the hide-dresser or furrier. Women took part in industrial life as makers of embroidered garments, workers in thorns, dyers, etc.


ANCIENT INDIA
(BHARATA-VARSHA)
English Miles
PAMIRS
SOGDIANA
BACTRIANA
GEDROSIA
MADRA
YAUDHEYA
MARU
Thar Desert
ANTARVEDI
VIDEHA
PUNDRA
VARDHANA
MAGADHA
AVANTI
ANARTA
VIDARBHA
UTKALA
KALINGA
DAKSHINAPATHA
PASCHIMA
PAYODHI
PURVA
SAGARA
DAKSHINA
JALANIDHI
Laccadive Islands
Andaman Islands
Nicobar Islands
CEYLON
Longitude East of Greenwich

Religious Development

Great changes took place in the religious life of the people. The lustre of the older gods was gradually dimmed, though one would still find, here and there, especially in the Atharva Veda, magnificent hymns celebrating the omniscience of Varuna or the beneficence of the Earth-Goddess. The sacrificial side of religion was greatly developed by the priests, while the popular superstitious belief in spirits, imps, spells, incantations and witchcraft found a place in the sacred canon. The monotheistic and monistic tendencies, that showed themselves prominently towards the close of the Rig-Vedic period, became more marked with the efflux of time. *Prajāpati*, the lord of created beings, cast all the older deities into the shade. The germs of the later doctrine of the *Avataras* or divine "descents" or incarnations, can be traced in stories about *Prajāpati* assuming the form of a boar to raise the earth from the primeval waters and becoming a tortoise when about to create offspring. While the priests and the theologians were absorbed in elaborate sacrificial rites and continued insistence in honour of *Prajāpati*, the Great Sacrificer, and the Embodiment of Sacrifice, philosophers threw doubts on the efficacy of ritual, speculated about the underlying unity of the universe, and sought for union with the supreme *Brahman* or *Paramātman*, the universal Soul or the Absolute "that dwelleth in every thing, that guideth all beings within," the Inward Guide, Immortal".

The common people, however, did not understand abstruse theological and philosophical speculations and began to show a predilection for certain deities already known to the *Rig-Veda* but not so prominent as Indra or Varuna. One of them was Rudra who already bore in the early hymns the epithet of *Śiva* (propitious) and soon came to be regarded as the Great God (*Mahādeva*) and the lord of animate beings (*Paśupati*). His popularity may have been due to his identification with the male deity of the pre-historic people of the Indus.

Side by side with Rudra arose another figure—Vishnu, a deity famed in the *Rig-Veda* for his three strides. As the guard of cosmic and moral order, the deliverer of mankind in distress and saviour of the Gods, Vishnu soon came to occupy the place of Varuna as the most exalted god. His abode, and the highest step (*parama-padam*) became the goal of sages and seers. By the final phase of the Vedic epoch he came to be identified with Vāsudeva—a hero or demi-god known to epic tradition as Krishna Devakīputra. In one Upanishad we find Krishna associated with

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Side by side with Rudra arose another figure—Vishṇu, a solar deity famed in the *Ṛig-Veda* for his three strides. As the source of cosmic and moral order, the deliverer of mankind in distress and saviour of the Gods, Vishṇu soon came to occupy the place of Varuṇa as the most sublime among the celestials, and his highest step (*paramampadam*) became the goal of sages and seers. Before the final close of the Vedic canon, he came to be identified with *Vāsudeva*—a hero or demi-god known to epic tradition as Kṛishṇa-Devakīputra. In one Upanishad we find Kṛishṇa associated with

a school of thought that rejected the purely ritualistic interpretation of sacrifice and considered the practice of virtue to be as effective as gifts to priests. In the final hour one should, according to this school, take refuge in these three thoughts: "You are the imperishable, the never-falling and the very essence of life." The goal of spiritual endeavour according to them, was the realm of light higher than heaven where dwelleth the God among the gods. Here we see the germ of some of the doctrines that received a more systematic treatment in later ages and lay at the root of the Bhāgavata creed.

Literature and Science

Before the close of the Vedic period, the Aryans possessed an extensive literature handed down in the Brāhmaṇical schools by memory. Some idea of the wide range of subjects in which the people interested themselves may be obtained from several lists given in the *Upanishads*. One such list makes mention not only of the *Vedas* but of *Itihāsa-purāṇa* (legend and ancient lore), *Pitrya* (the science relating to the Manes), *Rāśi* (mathematics), *Daiva* (knowledge of portents), *Nidhi* (chronology), *Vākovākya* (dialectics), *Ekāyana* (ethics), *Deva-vidyā* (etymological interpretation of divine names), *Brahmavidyā* (knowledge of the Absolute), *Bhūtavidyā* (demonology, or science of elements), *Kshatra vidyā* (the military science), *Nakshatra vidyā* (astronomy), *Sarpa vidyā* (the science of snakes), and *Devajana vidyā* (dancing and music or mythology). Another list mentions the *Vedas*, phonetics (*śikshā*), ritual (*kalpa*), grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), etymology (*nirukta*), metrics (*chhandas*) and astronomy (*jyotisha*). If all the subjects mentioned in the former list were dealt with in special treatises, most of them have not come down to us. A brief account of the extant works of Vedic literature included in the second list is given below.

The word *Veda* comes from the root *vid*, to know. It means knowledge in general. It is specially applied to a branch of literature which has been handed down from time immemorial by verbal transmission and is declared to be sacred knowledge or divine revelation (*Śruti*).

The Veda consists of four different classes of literary compositions:

(1) The *Mantra* (saying, song, formula) constitutes the oldest division of Vedic literature, and is distributed in four *Saṁhitās* or collections known as the *Ṛik*, *Sāma*, *Yajus*, and *Atharva Saṁhitās*. The first three are sometimes spoken of as the *Trayī*

or threefold knowledge, being alone recognised at first as canonical scriptures.

The *Ṛik-Saṁhitā* is a collection of lyrics in praise of different gods. These were recited by the priest styled the *hotṛi*. Most of the songs belong to an age anterior to what we have called the Later Vedic period, but the collection as a whole may not be so old. The *Saṁhitā* of the *Sāmaveda*, or the Book of Chants, contains hardly any independent matter, all its verses except seventy-five being taken directly from the *Ṛig-Veda*. Its songs were meant to be sung at the Soma sacrifice by a special class of priests called *Udgātṛi*. The *Saṁhitā* of the *Yajurveda*, or Book of Sacrificial Prayer, consists not only of stanzas taken from the *Ṛig-Veda*, but also of original prose formulas to be uttered by the *Adhvaryu* priest who performed the manual work involved in a sacrifice. The collection has two divergent texts, viz., (*a*) the *Saṁhitā* of the Black *Yajurveda* preserved in the *Taittirīya*, *Maitrāyanī* and *Kāṭhaka* recensions, and (*b*) the *Saṁhitā* of the White *Yajurveda* preserved in the *Vājasaneyī* recension.

At a time considerably later than the *Saṁhitās* mentioned above, a fourth attained to canonical recognition, the *Atharva Veda*, or the Book of Magic Formulas. Though its recognition came late, much of the matter contained in the collection is old. Some of the Atharvan hymns were of popular rather than priestly origin and may be as old as the earliest parts of the *Ṛig-Veda*. The *Atharva-Saṁhitā* is, in the main, a collection of songs, spells and incantations for the healing of disease, the restoration of harmony, the exorcism of evil spirits, etc. But there are certain hymns of rare beauty that celebrate the power and omniscience of God and the beneficence of Mother Earth.

> May Earth pour out her milk for us,
> a mother unto me her son.
> O Pṛithivī, auspicious be thy woodlands,
> auspicious be thy hills and snow-clad mountains.

(2) The second class of Vedic works are known by the name of *Brāhmaṇas*, i.e. treatises relating to prayer and sacrificial ceremony. They are mainly prose texts containing observations on sacrifice. They also contain cosmogonic myths, old legends and *gāthās* or verses celebrating the exploits of kings famed in priestly tradition.

(3) Next come the *Āraṇyakas* or forest texts, books of instruction to be given in the forest or writings meant for wood-dwelling hermits, which are found as appendices to the *Brāhmaṇas*. These treatises resemble the *Brāhmaṇas* in language, style and even

content, but they are concerned more with the allegorical signification of rites, and the mystic meaning of the texts of the *Saṁhitās*, than with elaborate rules for the performance of the great sacrifices. The bulk of the *Āraṇyaka* literature is old, but certain portions may belong to a date posterior to the period under review.

(4) Lastly we have the *Upanishads*, "secret or esoteric doctrines". The name is derived by some from the root *upa-ni-sad* which means "to sit down near some one" and is applied to doctrines that may be imparted to a son or a trusted pupil *seated near the teacher*. The Upanishads are either imbedded in the Āraṇyakas or form their supplements. They are also found as independent works. They contain deep speculations of a philosophical character which "revolve around the two conceptions of *Brahman* and *Ātman*", i.e. the universal soul, the Absolute and the individual self. The oldest Upanishads are usually regarded as pre-Buddhistic, but some of the treatises bearing the name "Upanishad" certainly belong to a much later period.

The classes of literary works named above are alone classed as *Śruti*, or Revelation, and constitute the Vedic literature proper. But closely connected with them as auxiliary treatises, though not regarded as a part of the Revelation, there exist a class of compositions called *Vedāṅga*, "members or limbs of the Veda". They are regarded as less authoritative than the Śruti, and are styled *Smṛiti*, memory or tradition, as handing down only the tradition derived from ancient sages to whom the Vedas were "revealed". They originated mostly in Vedic schools (*Charaṇas*) and their contents are often expressed in an extremely condensed style of prose intended for memorisation, to which the name *Sūtra* (thread, clue, guide, rule, aphorism) is given. Some of the treatises were versified in later times.

The *Vedāṅgas* are six in number, viz., *Śikshā* (phonetics), *Kalpa* (ritual), *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar), *Nirukta* (etymology), *Chhandas* (metrics), and *Jyotisha* (astronomy). These subjects are already mentioned in some of the *Upanishads*, though the extant manuals may belong to a much later period.

The manuals of *Śikshā* deal with the correct pronunciation and accentuation of the Vedic hymns. The productions of the Śikshā school include the "connected text" of the *Ṛig-Veda* as well as the "word-text" which gives the text of the verses in a complete grammatical analysis. But the most remarkable compositions of the Śikshā class are the *Prātiśākhya Sūtras* which contain the rules by the aid of which the *Saṁhitā-pāṭha* (connected text) can be formed from the *Pada-pāṭha* (word-text).

The treatises on *Kalpa* or ritual include the *Śrauta Sūtras* which lay down rules for the performance of the great sacrifices, the *Gṛihya Sūtras* which give directions for the simple ceremonies of daily life, and the *Dharma Sūtras* which deal with sacred and secular law and administration. As integral parts of the *Śrauta Sūtras* are found compositions styled *Śulva Sūtras* which lay down rules for the measurement and building of the place of sacrifice and the fire-altars, and are the oldest treatises on Indian geometry.

There are manuals supplementary to the *Kalpa Sūtras* styled *Pariśishṭas* or addenda.

In *Vyākaraṇa*, *Nirukta* and *Chhandas* we have the great works of Pāṇini, Yāska, and Piṅgala. A metrical work on *Jyotisha Vedāṅga* is extant, but it seems to belong to a comparatively late date.

CHAPTER V

THE BEGINNINGS OF MAGADHAN ASCENDANCY AND THE COMING OF THE YAVANAS

The Great Janapadas

THE idea of a universal king was present before the minds of the Ṛig-Vedic poets, and in the later Vedic texts we find mention of several rulers who went round the "earth" conquering on every side. These conquests, however, did not normally involve a permanent annexation of the territories of the vanquished people, though minor tribes may now and then have been reduced to vassalage and governed by rulers (*sthapati*) appointed by the conquering *rājan* (king). But from the sixth century B.C. we can trace a new development in Indian politics. We have the growth of a number of powerful kingdoms in eastern India—the very region which in the Brāhmaṇa texts is associated with rulers consecrated to a superior kind of kingship, styled *sāmrājya*—which gradually absorbed the neighbouring states till at last one great monarchy swallowed up the rest and laid the foundations of an empire which ultimately stretched from the Hindukush to the northern districts of Mysore. But before we take up the history of this remarkable political transformation, it is necessary for us to note the changes in the map of India since the period of the Brāhmaṇas and the classical Upanishads.

The widest area known to the Aryans of the Brāhmaṇa period is that described in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. The boundaries of the Aryan world stretched from the countries of the Uttara Kurus and the Uttara Madras beyond the Himālayas to the land of the Satvats (and Bhojas), south of the Jumnā and the Chambal, and from the territory of the *Nīchyas* and *Apāchyas* in the west to the realm of the *Prāchyas* in the east. The exact position of the *Nīchyas* and *Apāchyas* cannot be determined. But the *Prāchyas* were doubtless the Prasii of Greek writers, i.e., the people of Magadha and the neighbouring provinces. Beyond Magadha lived the *Puṇḍras* of North Bengal and the *Vaṅgas* of central and eastern Bengal who were outside the pale of Aryandom. The Vaṅgas,

however, are not mentioned in the *Brāhmaṇa* proper but *possibly* in the *Āraṇyaka* attached to it. In the south, besides the Aryan realms of the Bhojas, we find the Andhras of the Godāvarī valley and some aboriginal tribes inhabiting the Vindhyan forests.

The later literature of the Brāhmaṇical Hindus and the sacred canon of the Buddhists introduce some new names, e.g. Kaliṅga on the east coast stretching from the Vaitaranī in Orissa to the neighbourhood of the Godāvarī, Aśmaka and Mūlaka on the Upper Godāvarī, Avanti in Mālwa, Surāshṭra in Kāṭhiāwār and Sindhu-Sauvīra in the lower valley of the Indus. In an early Buddhist text we have a list of sixteen great nations that occupied the territory from the Kābul valley to the banks of the Godāvarī shortly before the rise of Buddhism. The names of these states are Aṅga (East Bihār), Magadha (South Bihār), Kāsi (Benares), Kosala (Oudh), Vṛiji (North Bihār), Malla (Gorakhpur district), Chedi (between the Jumnā and the Narmadā), Vatsa (Allahābād region), Kuru (Thānesar, Delhi and Meerut districts), Pañchāla (Bareilly, Budāūn and Farrukhābād districts), Matsya (Jaipur), Śūrasena (Mathurā), Aśmaka (on the Godāvarī), Avanti (in Mālwa), Gandhāra (Peshāwār and Rāwalpiṇḍi districts), and Kamboja (South-west Kāshmīr and parts of Kāfiristān). The palmy days of the Kurus and the Pañchālas were now over, and the centre of political gravity had shifted to the east.

The Vṛijian State

Among the eastern nations mentioned in the above list, the name of the *Videhas* is conspicuous by its absence, and in its place we find mention of Vṛiji (Vajji). The Vṛijian State was formed by the union of several clans including the *Lichchhavis* and the *Jñātṛikas*. Its capital was at Vaiśālī, modern Besarh or Basarh and Bakhira in the district of Muzaffarpur. The Vṛiji people have been represented by a modern writer as of Mongolian origin because they followed certain customs that are classed as Tibetan, such as exposure of the dead, and also because they are regarded by the Brāhmaṇa law-givers as *Vrātyas* or degraded Kshatriyas. But similar customs are found also among the Irānians; and the *Vrātyas*, judging from Vedic evidence, were clearly an Aryan people, though outside the pale of orthodox Brāhmaṇism. It is significant that in Buddhist literature the fine appearance of the *Lichchhavis* is compared to that of the *Tāvatiṁsa* gods.

The *Vṛijis* had no monarch, but a popular assembly and elders

who carried on the business of the State. This type of polity was known as a *Gaṇa* or republic. The *Mallas* had a similar constitution and there were besides these a number of smaller republics, e.g., the *Śākyas* of Kapilavastu, the *Bhargas* of Sumsumāra Hill, the *Mauryas* of Pipphalivana, etc.

Four Great Kingdoms

The republics had soon to contend with formidable enemies in the persons of the ambitious potentates of the neighbouring monarchies. Four of the kingdoms had grown more powerful than the rest and were following a policy of expansion and aggrandisement at the expense of their neighbours. These were Avanti, Vatsa, Kosala and Magadha.

The kingdom of Avanti had its capital at Ujjain in modern Mālwa. It was ruled by King Chaṇḍa Pradyota Mahāsena, who brought the states in the vicinity of his realm under his control. In the Vatsa territory, i.e., the district round Kauśāmbī or Kosam near Allahābād, reigned Udayana, a scion of the Bharata race, who carried off the beloved daughter of Pradyota and took a wife also from the royal house of Magadha. The supremacy of Udayana extended over the adjoining territory of the Bhargas.

Kosala was ruled by King Mahākosala and his son Prasenajit. It roughly corresponded to modern Oudh. In the heroic age it had its capital at Ayodhyā, on the bank of the river Sarayū, and was ruled by a dynasty that claimed descent from the illustrious Ikshvāku, famed in Vedic and epic tradition. Kosala kings like Para, son of Aṭṇāra, won renown as conquerors and sacrificers. Epic tradition represents Kosalan princes as having penetrated through the wilds of Daṇḍakāraṇya, in the Deccan, to the banks of the Pampā or the Tuṅgabhadrā and even to the distant island of Ceylon. A branch of the ruling family established itself in Śrāvastī, which has been identified with the great ruined city on the south bank of the Rāptī represented by Saheṭh-Maheṭh. Members of this line extended the boundaries of Kosala in several directions and absorbed the territory of the Sākyas in the Nepalese Tarai and that of the Kāsis in the present district of Benares. But the ambitious designs of Kosala were soon frustrated by another power that arose in the fastnesses of South Bihār.

Magadha, embracing the districts of Patna and Gayā in the southern part of Bihār, could boast of powerful chieftains even in the days of the Vedic *Ṛishis* and the epic poets. As the probable home of the non-Aryan *Kīkaṭas*, who were noted for their wealth

of kine, it was a coveted prize of the Aryan invader, who, however, could not Brāhmaṇise it thoroughly even in the period of the *Kalpa Sūtras*. It came to possess a mixed population. Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas coming to the land were spoken of in a derisive tone as *Brahma-bandhu* and *Kshatra-bandhu*, that is, so-called Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas. It had special relations with Aryans outside the pale to whom the name *Vrātya* was given in the Vedic canon.

In the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. the throne of Magadha was occupied by a line of kings styled Śaiśunāgas in the Purāṇas, an appellation derived from Śiśunāga, the first king of the line in the Purāṇic list. Buddhist writers, however, place Śiśunāga much lower in the list of kings, and split up the line into two distinct groups. To the earlier of the two groups they give the name Haryaṅka. The second and later group, consisting of Śiśunāga, his son and grandsons, alone deserve, according to their evidence, the name Śaiśunāga.

Bimbisāra

The most remarkable king of the Haryaṅka line was Śreṇika or Bimbisāra, who was anointed king by his father while yet a boy of fifteen. The event took place, according to Ceylonese tradition, sixty years before the *Parinirvāṇa*, or the death of the Buddha. The *Parinirvāna* happened in 544 B.C. according to a Ceylonese reckoning and in 486 B.C. according to a Cantonese tradition of A.D. 489. The date 544 B.C. can, however, hardly be reconciled with a statement in the Ceylonese Chronicles that Aśoka Maurya, who is known to have flourished in the third century B.C., was consecrated two hundred and eighteen years after the Buddha had passed into Nirvāṇa. This fact and certain Chinese and Chola synchronisms led Geiger and a few other scholars to think that the era of 544 B.C. is a comparatively modern fabrication and that the true date of the death of the Buddha is 483 B.C.—a result closely approaching that to which the Cantonese tradition leads us.

The Chinese account of embassies which King Meghavarṇa sent to Samudra Gupta and King Kia-che (Kassapa) sent to China in A.D. 527 also speak in favour of the date 486 B.C. or 483 B.C. for the *Parinirvāṇa*. Geiger's date, however, is not explicitly recognised by tradition. The Cantonese date, therefore, may be accepted as a working hypothesis for the Aśokan and pre-Aśokan periods. The date of Bimbisāra's accession, according to this reckoning, would fall about 545 B.C.

From the first, Bimbisāra pursued a policy of expansion. He

possessed certain advantages denied to many of his contemporaries. He was the ruler of a compact kingdom protected on all sides by mountains and rivers. His capital, Girivraja, was enclosed by five hills. It was also girded with stone walls which are among the oldest extant stone structures in India. The soil of the country was rich, yielding luxuriant crops. It was made richer by the gold-bearing stream, the Hiraṇyavāha or the Śoṇa, which unites with the Ganges near Patna. The people profited by the trade that passed along the Ganges, or followed the land-route through the city of Gayā. In his war-elephants the eastern monarch had a fighting machine which could be used with terrible effect against his western neighbours.

The most notable achievement of Bimbisāra was the annexation of the neighbouring kingdom of Aṅga or East Bihār, which had its capital at Champā near Bhāgalpur. He also entered into matrimonial alliances with the ruling families of Kosala and Vaiśālī. His Kosalan wife brought a Kāsi village yielding a large revenue. The Vaiśālī marriage ultimately paved the way for the expansion of Magadha northward to the borders of Nepāl. Bimbisāra organised an efficient system of administration. He is also credited by a Chinese pilgrim with having built a new city at the foot of the hills lying to the north of Girivraja, which he named Rājagṛiha, or the king's house, the modern Rājgir in the Patna district. Under him Magadha became a flourishing kingdom which attracted the most enlightened men of the age. Both Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the last apostle of the Jainas, and Gautama Buddha, the great Master of the Buddhists, preached their doctrines during the reign of Bimbisāra. Tradition affirms that in his old age the king was murdered by his son Ajātaśatru.

Ajātaśatru

Ajātaśatru, also known as Kūṇika, soon found that his throne was not a bed of roses. Prasenajit of Kosala, brother of the queen-dowager, who had died of grief, resolved to avenge himself on the parricide. The republican tribes on the northern and north-western borders of Magadha were restive and entered into a league with the enemies of Ajātaśatru in Kāsi-Kosala. The Magadhan king had thus to face the hostility not only of the ruler of Srāvastī but also of the Vṛijis of Vaiśālī and the Mallas of Kuśīnagara (Kasia in Gorakhpur) and Pāvā (probably Padraona on the Gaṇḍak river). To repel the Vṛijis, Magadhan statesmen fortified the village of Pāṭaligrāma which stood near the confluence of the Ganges

and the Śoṇa. Thus was founded the famous fortress which, within a generation, developed into the stately city of Pāṭaliputra, the metropolis of India for well-nigh four centuries.

Thanks to his own tenacity and the Machiavellian policy of his ministers, Ajātaśatru succeeded in defeating all his adversaries. The Vṛiji territory was annexed to the kingdom of Magadha. Kosala was humbled but not crushed, and, at a slightly later period, we hear of a Kosalan king, a son of Prasenajit, powerful enough to perpetrate a massacre of the Śākyas. Prasenajit himself had to renounce his claim to the Kāsi village which had hitherto formed a bone of contention, and give his Magadhan antagonist his daughter in marriage. In religious tradition Ajātaśatru is remembered as a patron of Devadatta, the schismatic cousin of the Buddha, and also as a friend of both the Jainas and the Buddhists. Both Mahāvīra and the Buddha are said to have died early in his reign. After the death of the latter, a Buddhist Council was held at Rājagṛiha which took disciplinary measures against certain prominent members of the Church and compiled the holy scriptures.

Successors of Ajātaśatru

According to the Purāṇas, the immediate successor of Ajātaśatru was Darśaka, after whom came his son Udāyi. The name of Darśaka occurs also in a play named *Svapna-Vāsavadatta*, attributed to Bhāsa, which represents him as a brother-in-law and contemporary of Udayana, king of Kauśāmbī. But Buddhist and Jain writers agree in asserting that Udāyi was the son of Ajātaśatru and also his successor. A Nāga-dāsaka is placed by the former at the end of the list of kings of Bimbisāra's line, and this ruler is dentified by some with the Darśaka of the Purāṇas. In view of the antiquity of the Buddhist tradition, it is difficult to accept the Purāṇic statement about Udāyi's relationship with Darśaka and Ajātaśatru as correct.

Udāyi had probably to fight with the king of Avanti, but the most notable event of his reign was the foundation of the city of Kusumapura or Pāṭaliputra nestling under the shelter of the fortress erected by the ministers of Ajātaśatru.

The history of Magadha after Udāyi is obscure. The Purāṇic Chronicles place immediately after him two kings named Nandivardhana and Mahānandin, the last of whom is said to have had a son, by a Śūdra woman, named Mahāpadma or Mahāpadmapati Nanda, with whom began a line of Śūdra or semi-Śūdra kings. Buddhist writers, on the other hand, insert thirteen additional

names between Udāyi and Nandivardhana. They omit Mahānandin and mention in his place a prince named Pañchamaka. According to the Buddhist account, Udāyi was followed by Anuruddha, Muṇḍa, and Nāgadāsaka, all parricides, of whom the last was banished by the indignant citizens, who met together and anointed as their king a worthy minister known by the name of Susunāga (Śiśunāga). Śiśunāga was succeeded by his son Kālāsoka, after whom came his sons, ten in number, of whom the ninth was Nandivardhana and the tenth Pañchamaka. One Buddhist work, the *Asokāvadāna*, mentions Kākavarṇin, instead of Kālāsoka, among the successors of Muṇḍa.

The most important divergence between the Buddhist and Purāṇic accounts is in regard to the place assigned to Śiśunāga and Kākavarṇin (Kākavarṇa) in the dynastic lists. While Buddhist writers place them long after Bimbisāra, Ajātaśatru and even Udāyi, and represent them as belonging to a different family, the Purāṇas make them head the whole list and actually refer to them as ancestors of Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru. There is, however, one detail in the Purāṇic account which throws doubt on the credibility of the tradition it transmits, and tends to confirm the Buddhist evidence. After mentioning the successors of Pradyota, king of Avanti, whom we know to be a contemporary of Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru, the Purāṇas say: "Śiśunāga will destroy all their prestige and will be king." This clear assertion undoubtedly supports the view that Śiśunāga came long after Bimbisāra and Ajātaśatru, and carried on their forward policy by the absorption of the powerful kingdom of Avanti (Mālwa).

Śiśunāga's successor, Kālāsoka or Kākavarṇin, seems to have been a ruler of some consequence. He transferred his royal residence permanently from Girivraja to Pāṭaliputra, though Vaiśālī was occasionally graced by the presence of the sovereign. It was in this last city that the second great Council of the Buddhists is said to have been held in the tenth year of the king's reign when a century had gone by since the *Parinirvāṇa* of the Buddha. The Assembly settled some disputed points of discipline and condemned the action of certain Vṛijian monks who tried to introduce a relaxation of the rules. The end of Kākavarṇa was tragic. Tradition affirms that he had a dagger thrust into his throat in the vicinity of a city which may have been Pāṭaliputra, Vaiśālī or some other important city in the empire. His sons were probably young and inexperienced and soon made room for a man of sterner stuff.

The Nandas

The new king belonged to a family called Nanda by all our authorities. His personal name or epithet was Mahāpadma or Mahāpadmapati, "sovereign of an infinite host", or "of immense wealth", according to the Purāṇas, and Ugrasena, "possessed of a terrible army", according to Buddhist writers. After him his eight sons ruled in succession, and then the crown went to Chandragupta Maurya, the founder of a new and more illustrious dynasty. The total duration of the Nanda line was 155 years according to the Jain texts, a century according to the Purāṇas, and only 22 years according to the Buddhist chronicles of Ceylon. The Jain figure is too high for a couple of generations. The Purāṇas agree in assigning a period of 12 years to the sons of Mahāpadma. But they differ in regard to the duration of the reign of Mahāpadma himself, which some put at 88 years and others at 28 years. The smaller figure 28 when added to 12 does not make up the total 100. The higher figure 88 for one reign is incredible and its rejection involves a reduction of the total period of 100 years assigned by Purāṇic tradition to the Nandas. In view of this, the Ceylonese account cannot be lightly dismissed.

The total number of kings belonging to the dynasty is nine. Some recent writers, however, take the word *Nava*, in the expression *Navananda* occurring in the texts, to mean not *nine* but *new* or *later*. They contrast the *Navanandas* with the so-called *Pūrvanandas*, or earlier Nandas, alleged to be mentioned by Kshemendra, and take the latter to be identical with the last kings of the Śaiśunāga line. But the dynastic designation *Nanda* is never applied to the kings of the Śaiśunāga family. Our authorities know of only one Nanda line, and are unanimous in taking *Nava* to mean *nine* and not *new*. In Kshemendra's story, Pūrvananda is the name of a single individual and not a dynasty, and he is distinguished, not from the Navanandas, but from Yogananda or Pseudo-Nanda, reanimated corpse of king Nanda.

Regarding the parentage of the first Nanda, we have two distinct traditions. The Purāṇas represent him as son of Mahānandin, the last king of the Śaiśunāga dynasty, by a Śūdra woman. Jaina writers, on the other hand, represent him as the son of a courtesan by a barber. The Jaina tradition about the barber origin of the first Nanda is strikingly supported by the testimony of Quintus Curtius. Referring to the *father* of the *predecessor* of Chandragupta Maurya who must be identified with the first Nanda, Curtius says that he was a barber who gained the affections of the queen, murdered his

sovereign, and then, under the pretence of acting as guardian of the royal children, usurped the supreme authority. He next put the young princes to death. The murdered sovereign seems to have been Kākavarṇin, whose sons were evidently the young princes who were done to death by the ambitious barber.

The new king, though of humble origin, was a vigorous ruler. Purāṇic tradition affirms that he exterminated all Kshatriyas and became sole monarch, bringing all under his undisputed sway. The ascription of a wide dominion to the Nanda king is supported by Greek evidence which refers to the most powerful peoples who dwelt beyond the Beas in the time of Alexander as being under one sovereign who had his capital at Pāṭaliputra. A Kaliṅga inscription of early date refers to Nanda's connection with an aqueduct in that country. This may be taken to imply that King Nanda held sway also in Kaliṅga, that is, Southern Orissa and the contiguous part of the Northern Circars.

The first Nanda was succeeded by his eight sons, of whom the last was named Dhana-Nanda, the Agrammes or Xandrames of classical writers. This monarch owned a vast treasure and commanded a huge army of 20,000 cavalry, 200,000 infantry, 2,000 chariots and no less than 3,000 elephants. Some writers raise the number of horsemen, chariots and elephants to 80,000, 8,000, and 6,000 respectively. To amass the treasure and maintain the huge force, the king had to resort to heavy taxation. His conduct towards the people bespoke his low origin. It is therefore no wonder that he was "detested and held cheap by his subjects". The disaffected element found a leader in Chandragupta who overthrew the Nanda dynasty, and laid the foundation of the illustrious family of the Mauryas. If tradition is to be believed, a Taxilian Brāhmaṇa named Kauṭilya or Chāṇakya played a leading part in the dynastic revolution. The conqueror of the Nandas had also another problem—the presence of foreign invaders in the north-western provinces of his country.

Persian and Macedonian Invasions

Gandhāra, the territory round Peshāwār and Rāwalpiṇḍi, was, in the time of Bimbisāra, under a king named Pukkusāti, who sent an embassy and a letter to the king of Magadha. What the object of the mission was we do not know, but about the middle of the sixth century B.C. we find the hordes of Cyrus (*c.* 558–530 B.C.), the founder of the Achaemenian empire of Persia, knocking at the gates of India and destroying the famous city of Kāpiśa near the

junction of the Ghorband and Panjshir rivers north-east of Kābul. The district west of the river Indus became tributary to the Persians, and the name of Gandhāra began to appear prominently among the subject nations in the early inscriptions of Darius (522–486 B.C.), the most illustrious among the successors of Cyrus. Darius followed up the earlier successes of his house by sending a naval expedition to the Indus under the command of Skylax. This expedition paved the way for the annexation of the Indus valley as far as the deserts of Rājputāna. It constituted the twentieth and the most populous satrapy of the Persian empire. It paid a tribute proportionately larger than all the rest—360 Euboic talents of gold dust, equivalent to more than a million sterling.

Xerxes, the son of Darius I, and his successors seem to have maintained some control over the Indian provinces, which furnished contingents to their army. Reference is made in certain inscriptions of Xerxes to the suppression of rebellion in lands "where, before, the Daivas were worshipped; then, by Ahuramazda's will, of such temples of the Daivas I (the king) sapped the foundations". The Daiva-worshipping lands may have included the Indian satrapies. But the hold of the later Achaemenians on their eastern possessions gradually became weak, and towards the middle of the fourth century B.C. the Indian borderland was parcelled out among various small States, the rulers of which were practically independent.

The hill country north of the Kābul river, drained by the Kunar and the Swāt, was occupied mainly by the Aśvakas, a people whose name is derived from the Sanskrit *Aśva*, Irānian *Aspa* (horse). Somewhere in this mountain region stood also the city of Nysa, alleged to have been founded by Greek colonists. The old territory of Gandhāra was divided into two parts by the Indus. To the west of the river lay the kingdom of Pushkalāvatī in the modern district of Peshāwār and to its east was the realm of Taxila in the present district of Rāwalpiṇḍi. Taxila was a prosperous kingdom governed by good laws. Its capital was a noble city which occupied the site of the present Bhir Mound near Saraikala, twenty miles north-west of Rāwalpiṇḍi. It lay on the high road from Central Asia to the interior of India, and the fame of its market-place spread to the distant corners of the civilised world. Great as an emporium of commerce, the city was greater still as a centre of learning. Crowds of eager scholars flocked to it for instruction in the three Vedas and the eighteen branches of knowledge. Tradition affirms that the Great Epic, the *Mahābhārata* was first recited in this city.

The mountain territory just above the Taxila country was occupied by the kingdoms of Uraśā (Hazāra district) and Abhisāra (Punch and Naoshera). To the south-east of Taxila lay the twin kingdoms of the Pūrus or Pauravas, a people already famous in the Vedic hymns. The territory of the prince mentioned by Greek historians as the elder Poros, was situated between the Jhelum and the Chenāb, while the principality of his nephew, the younger Poros, stretched from the Chenāb to the Rāvi. On the confines of the country of the Pauravas lay the territories of the Glaukanikoi and Kathaioi and the principality of Saubhūti. The southern part of the Jhang district with the contiguous portion of the lower valley of the Rāvī was occupied by the *Śibis* and the *Mālavas*, with whom were associated the *Kshudrakas*, while lower down the Chenāb lived the *Ambashṭhas*. These tribes were autonomous and some of them are expressly mentioned as having a democratic government. Upper Sind was divided among a number of potentates of whom the most important was Mousikanos, whose capital probably lay at or near Alor. In the Indus delta stood the city of Pattala which, like Sparta, was governed by two kings and a Senate of Elders.

The distracted condition of the country invited invasion from without, and political changes in western Asia and the land of the Yavanas or the Greeks and Macedonians indicated the quarter from which it came. The door was opened to the invader by certain Indians whose hatred for their neighbours made them blind to the true interests of their country.

In 336 B.C. the throne of Macedon, a powerful military State in the land of the Yavanas in south-east Europe, was occupied by Alexander, a prince of remarkable energy and ability. In 333 and 331 B.C. Alexander inflicted two severe defeats on the great king of Persia, the last of the line of Darius and Xerxes, and occupied his realm. In 330 B.C. the Persian king died, leaving his conqueror the undisputed master of the Achaemenian empire. Three years later, in 327 B.C., Alexander crossed the Hindukush and resolved to recover the Indian satrapies that had once acknowledged the sway of his Persian predecessors. To secure his communications, he garrisoned a number of strongholds near modern Kābul and passed the winter of 327–326 B.C. in warfare with the fierce hill tribes of the Kunar and Swāt valleys. He stormed the fortresses of Massaga and Aornos and received the submission of the city of Nysa. His generals took the city of Pushkalāvatī. Massaga probably lay to the north of the Malakand Pass. Aornos has recently been identified with the height of Unā between the Swāt

and the Indus, while Nysa has been located on the lower spurs of the three-peaked Koh-i-Mor between the Kunar and Swāt valleys. Pushkalāvatī is represented by the modern Charsadda near the junction of the Swāt and Kābul rivers, about seventeen miles north-east of Peshāwār.

The conqueror next forced his way through dense jungles to Ohind and crossed the Indus by a bridge of boats (326 B.C.). In his operations, he received valuable help from Āmbhi, king of Taxila, who now received the invader in his own capital with obsequious pomp. After a brief respite, Alexander resumed his march and pushed on to the Hydaspes (Vitastā, modern Jhelum). According to one theory, he followed the line of the modern Grand Trunk Road to the town of Jhelum. According to another view, he descended through the pass of Nandan to the right bank of the Hydaspes close to the village of Haranpur. On his arrival, he found a huge army drawn up on the other bank of the river to oppose his further progress. The formidable host was led by the elder Paurava king, a man of gigantic and powerful build, who was mortified at the pusillanimous conduct of his Taxilian neighbour, and resolved to defend his hearth and home against the audacious invader from the west. Alexander found it impossible to cross the stream, which was then in full flood, in the face of a mighty array of warriors and elephants. He diverted the attention of his enemy by demonstrations in different directions and then stole a passage at a sharp bend of the river about seventeen miles above his camp, under cover of a thickly wooded promontory and an island in mid-stream covered with jungle. The place of crossing is located by some above the town of Jhelum and by others at Jalalpur. A small force that had hurried to dispute the passage of the invaders was easily routed, and Alexander advanced quickly to give battle to the Indian king. The Paurava, too, marched forth to meet his adversary and drew up his army in battle array. He had with him 30,000 foot, 4,000 horses, 300 chariots, and 200 elephants. He arranged his elephants in front of the infantry and placed the cavalry on the wings with chariots in front of them. The vast force looked like a city with elephants as bastions and men-at-arms as the circumvallating wall. The field of battle cannot be definitely located. Scholars who place Alexander's camp at Jhelum think that the hostile forces met in the Karri plain.

The Indian king made the mistake of allowing the Macedonians to take the offensive with their superior cavalry. The latter began by an attack on the Indian left wing. The Indian charioteer and

horseman could not withstand the onslaught of the mounted archers in the Macedonian ranks, and the Indian infantry were prevented by the slippery slush under foot from making an effective use of their formidable bows. The elephants for a time spread havoc in the enemy's ranks, but many of the monsters were maddened by wounds and rushed on friends and foes alike. The Paurava force suffered most and was soon scattered by the veterans of Alexander. The Indian king, however, did not flee, but went on fighting on a mighty elephant until he received a severe wound. He was then brought to the presence of the conqueror, who asked him how he would like to be treated. "Act like a king," answered the valiant Paurava. The Macedonian treated his gallant adversary generously and gave him back his kingdom. It was no part of Alexander's policy to alienate the sympathy of powerful local princes if it could be helped, and he understood the value of brave and chivalrous allies in a newly-acquired territory, far away from the seat of empire, who could be trusted to uphold the authority of the supreme ruler and serve as a check on one another.

The invader next overran the petty principalities and tribal territories in the vicinity of the realm of the great Paurava. He crossed the Akesines (Chenāb) and the Hydraotes (Rāvī), stormed Sāngala, the stronghold of the Kathaioi, probably situated in the Gurudaspur district, and moved on to the Hyphasis (Beas). He wished to press forward to the Ganges valley, but his war-worn troops would not allow him to go farther. The king erected twelve towering altars to mark the utmost limit of his march, and then with a heavy heart retraced his steps to the Jhelum. He sent part of his troops down the river in a flotilla of boats under the command of Nearchos. The rest fought their way through the territory of free and warlike tribes inhabiting the lower valley of the Rāvī and the Chenāb. Thousands of people, including women and children, perished in the course of the struggle, and the inhabitants of one city, preferring death to dishonour, threw themselves into the flame in the manner of the Rājputs who practised *Jauhar* in later times.

The conqueror himself received a dangerous wound while storming one of the citadels of the powerful tribe of the *Mālavas*. The subdued nations made presents of chariots, bucklers, gems, draperies, lions, tigers, etc. Alexander next reduced the principalities of Sind and sailed to the open sea (325 B.C.). A portion of the Macedonian host had already been sent home through Afghānistān. Another division, led by the king himself, trudged through the deserts of Baluchistān and, after terrible sufferings, reached Babylon. The

rest of the troops returned by sea to the north of the Tigris under the command of Nearchos. Alexander did not long survive his return to Babylon, where he died in 323 B.C.

Administrative arrangements made by Alexander

The Macedonian king had no desire to renounce his new conquests. He wished to incorporate them permanently into his extensive empire. He formed the districts to the west of the Hydaspes into regular satrapies under Persian or Macedonian governors who were assisted, in some cases, by Indian chiefs like Śaśigupta of Aornos and Āmbhi of Taxila. Beyond the river he created a system of protected States under vassal kings, among whom the great Paurava and the king of Abhisāra were the most eminent. Macedonian garrisons were stationed in Pushkalāvatī, Taxila, and other important strategic centres. New cities were built, mostly on the great rivers, to establish the authority of the conqueror firmly in the acquired territories and stimulate trade and navigation in the Land of the Five Rivers.

Effect of the Persian and Macedonian Invasions

The Macedonian prefectures and garrisons were soon swept away by Chandragupta Maurya, and within a few years all vestige of foreign domination disappeared from the Punjab and Sind. But the invasions of Darius and Alexander had not been in vain. The Persian conquest had unveiled India probably for the first time to the Western world and established contact between this country and the peoples of the Levant. Indian spearmen and archers fought under the Persian banner on European soil in the fifth century B.C. and quickened the interest of the peoples of Hellas in this land of strange folks and surpassing wealth. Persian and Greek officials found employment in the Indus provinces and made their presence felt in various ways. The introduction of new scripts—Aramaic, *Kharoshṭhī* and the alphabet styled *Yavanānī* by Pāṇini, is probably to be traced to this source. Whether some important features of the architecture of the Maurya period and certain phrases used in the Aśokan edicts are also to be attributed to their enterprise, is a highly debatable question. The hold of the great king on the Indian frontier slackened considerably in the fourth century B.C. The arduous campaigns of Alexander restored the fallen fabric of imperialism and laid the foundation of a closer contact between India and the Hellenic

world. The Macedonian empire in the Indus valley no doubt perished within a short time. But the Macedonian had welded the political atoms into one unit and thus paved the way for the more permanent union under the Mauryas. The voyages and expeditions planned by Alexander widened the geographical horizon of his contemporaries, and opened up new lines of communication and new routes for trade and maritime enterprise. The colonies that the conqueror planted in the Indian borderland do not appear to have been altogether wiped out by the Mauryas. Yavana officials continued to serve the great king of Magadha as they had served the great king of Ecbatana and Persepolis, and Yavana adventurers carved out independent kingdoms in the north-west when the sun of Magadha set. If Greeks in later ages learnt lessons in philosophy and religion from Indian Buddhists and Bhāgavatas, the Indians on their part imitated the Greek coinage, honoured Greek astronomers and appreciated Hellenistic art. This was due ultimately to the measures that Alexander had adopted "to set little bits of Hellas down" in the wilds of Western and Central Asia and on the banks of the Indus and the Akesines.

CHAPTER VI

CIVILISATION IN THE EARLY DAYS OF MAGADHAN ASCENDANCY

Sources

For the history of the Indian civilisation during the early period of Magadhan hegemony we have to turn to various sources. No single set of documents gives a picture of the whole of India. For an authentic account of the Indus valley and the north-western borderland, we have to depend mainly on Greek evidence. For the *Madhya-deśa* or the upper Ganges valley, and particularly its western part, the land of the Kurus and the Pañchālas which was the cradle and centre of Brāhmaṇism, we have to look to the Brāhmaṇical *Sūtras* and the early epic. The epic, no doubt, looks back to the heroic age which is coeval with the later Vedic period, but the extant poems have a wider geographical outlook than the later Vedic texts. It is, however, significant that neither epic mentions the city of Pāṭaliputra. Girivraja, Rājagṛiha, or Vasumatī is mentioned as the capital of Magadha. Both the epics are familiar with the prowess of the king of Magadha, and the longer poem pre-supposes a Magadhan empire. The lesser epic mentions a powerful Kosalan realm contemporaneous with *Vaiśālika Nṛipas* (rulers of Vaiśālī). References to Buddhism occur in both but are extremely rare. Greeks and Śakas are familiar but have no essential connection with the original tale. Barring the bulk of the didactic books and the latest episodes and cantos, the evidence of the epic may with confidence be utilised for our period. For north-east India the most useful information is to be found in the early Pāli canon and the sacred books of the Jainas. Stray notices of the peoples of Southern India are found in some of these works, but detailed information is lacking and the picture is dim. South India possesses a splendid literature of its own, but the date of the extant works is comparatively late and can hardly be utilised for the pre-Mauryan period.

Administration

Neither in the east nor in the west was monarchy the only form of government in the beginning of our period or towards its close. There were, no doubt, powerful *rājās* in South Bihār and Oudh, as well as in Mālwa and the Punjab, who were fighting to extend their authority at the expense of their neighbours and build up true imperial States. But they had to reckon with free and warlike tribes, governed by their own elders and owning the authority of no monarch. Kingship, again, was not everywhere of the same type. Some of the kingdoms in eastern India were true *Sāmrājyas*, governed by rulers who could justly call themselves *Ekarāṭ* or sole monarch. In the Indus delta, on the other hand, we have kings who commanded in war but left the work of government to a Senate of Elders. The number of kings was two, as in Sparta, an early instance of *dvairājya* or diarchy, so famous in Indian history and tradition. While Śūdras acquired supreme power in the lower Ganges valley, the state of things in the lower valley of the Indus was different, and great political power was exercised by the Brāhmaṇas. The *rājā* of the *Madhya-deśa*, judging by the testimony of the epic, was no autocrat. He carried on the affairs of his realm with the assistance of the *Sabhā*, usually consisting of princes of the blood and military chiefs. The circle of advisers was sometimes enlarged by the admission of priests and officials or representatives of lower orders like the *Sūtas*. Among certain tribes, all clansmen had a right to attend the *Sabhā*, which was thus a popular assembly and not a council of magnates. Even in kingdoms where the popular assembly is not much in evidence, the monarch had to defer to the wishes of Brāhmaṇas, elders of corporations and the commonalty. He had to do what was pleasing to the people. For the efficient discharge of his duties he had to learn the *Vedas* and the *Śāstras*. Tyrannical princes were not infrequently expelled from the throne. Even in Magadha, the citadel of imperialism, the king consulted the village headmen. A dynasty was driven out by the citizens because of its delinquencies.

Monarchies were often hereditary and the reigning prince at times nominated his successor. But cases of election are referred to by all our authorities. Choice was sometimes limited to members of the royal family, but on occasions selections were made from outside. A Greek writer tells us that in a certain district of the Punjab the handsomest man was chosen as king. Kingship was no longer a monopoly of the Kshatriya caste, and one of the most powerful dynasties of the age was of Śūdra extraction.

With the growth of kingdoms and the incorporation of new territory, the office of the viceroy and provincial governor became more and more important. In the eastern and north-western monarchies it was often held by a prince of the blood, a practice that was followed in later times by the Mauryas and some of the Timurids. The epic does not seem to favour the policy of permanent annexation of foreign territory. Conquered provinces were usually restored to the old ruling family, but when appointments to rulership were made from the centre, the choice fell not on a prince of the blood but on military chiefs at the imperial court. These chiefs were not always Kshatriyas. The Kurus, for example, appointed a Brāhmaṇa to rule over a portion of the Pañchāla territory that they had conquered, and a Kuru king gave the government of Aṅga to a warrior who was believed to be the son of a *Sūta*. In Kosala Brāhmaṇas received districts with power over them as if they were kings.

Among State functionaries, the *Purohita* was of special importance in Kāsi-Kosala, as we learn from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and several *Jātakas*. A *Sūtra* work tells us that a single person was at one time the *Purohita* of the three kingdoms of Kāsi, Kosala, and Videha. The *eka-Purohita* was the priestly counterpart of the warrior *eka-rāṭ*. In the Kuru-Pañchāla and Matsya countries, on the other hand, the *Purohita* was over-shadowed by the *Senāpati*, whose office was scarcely inferior to that of the king himself. The Senāpati was often a prince of the blood or a person of royal rank, and, like the king, had to do judicial work in certain parts of the country in addition to his military duties.

The most important feature of the administrative development of the period under review was the rise of a class of high officials styled *mahāmātras*, who are unknown to the Vedic texts and gradually tend to disappear after the Maurya and Sātavāhana periods. They were charged with duties of a varied character. Some looked after general affairs (*sarvārthaka*). Others administered justice (*vyāvahārika*). A third body had charge of the army (*senā-nāyaka*). Others were entrusted with the work of cadastral survey (*rajjugrāhaka*) or measurement of the king's share of the produce (*dronamāpaka*).

In the administration of justice, the king continued to play an important part. It was his duty to give decisions in accordance with the special laws of the districts, castes, and families. But much of the judicial work was now entrusted to the *Vyāvahārikas* or judges. The process of law in certain localities was, according to Buddhist tradition, a complicated affair. There were various

tribunals, set one above the other, from the court of the *Viniśchaya mahāmātra* to that of the *rājan*. Judgments were pronounced according to the Book of Customs. But the work which records the tradition is of late date, and it is difficult to say whether the procedure outlined in it was the special characteristic of a particular locality governed by a republic, or had a wider application. In criminal law the use of Ordeals is recognised.

Scarcely less important than the administration of justice was the protection of the people from armed foes. To do this duty the rulers had to maintain big armies. Important changes were effected in military organisation by the introduction of war-elephants as a regular feature of the fighting forces, and the creation of the body of *mahāmātras* to take charge of the department of war. Armies of the period usually consisted of four elements: infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants. To these the later epic adds the navy, labourers, spies and local guides. Greek writers refer to expert sailors in the Indus delta whom the Macedonians employed to steer their vessels down to the ocean when their own attempts at navigation failed. It is not improbable that rulers of the deltaic regions maintained small fleets even before the organisation of a big naval department by the founder of the Maurya dynasty.

About the equipment of Indian troops in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. we have fortunately a few details recorded by Greek observers. The Indian infantry, clad in cotton garments, usually carried long bows and iron-tipped arrows made of cane. Some were armed with spears. They also carried a two-handed sword and a buckler of undressed ox-hide. The cavalry had usually the same equipment as the infantry. The chariots were drawn by horses or wild asses and carried six men apiece, of whom two were bowmen, two were shield-bearers, and two were charioteers. Epic poets refer to the division of the army into *akshauhinīs*, *vāhinīs*, etc., mention different kinds of battle-array (*vyūha*), and allude to various projectiles including the *śataghnī* or hundred-killer. Jaina writers refer to the use made by Ajātaśatru of the *mahāsilākanṭaga* and *ra(t)hamusala*. The first seems to have been some engine of war of the nature of a catapult which threw big stones. The second was a chariot to which a mace was attached and which, running about, effected great execution.

Greek writers bear testimony to the fact that in the art of war Indians were far superior to the other peoples of Asia. Their failure to offer a successful resistance to foreign invaders was often due to an inferiority in cavalry. Indian commanders in ancient times pinned their faith more upon elephants than upon horses.

The maintenance of a splendid court, a big army and a large body of civil officials required money. Weak rulers had sometimes to appease their conquerors by the payment of heavy tribute. Some of the kings loved to hoard treasure to the amount of several millions. The collection of revenue was, therefore, all-important to the State, and sometimes strange expedients were resorted to by rulers to fill their treasuries. The oldest source of revenue was the *bali*, a contribution mentioned as early as the Vedic hymns. *Balikṛit*, payer of contribution, was a common epithet for the ordinary freeman in the Vedic period. The word *śulka* is found by some scholars in a dubious passage of the *Atharva Veda*. The use of the revenue term *bhāga* is implied by the name *Bhāga-dugha* applied to a high State official in the *Brāhmaṇa* texts. *Bhāga*, the king's share of reaped corn, became, in course of time, the most important source of State revenue, and *shaḍbhāgin*, "a sharer of the sixth part", a standing epithet of the king. The *bhāga* was measured out either by the village authorities or by royal officials at the barn-doors, or by survey of the crops. Among the most important revenue officials was the *Grāma-bhojaka* or village head-man. The office was sometimes held by royal ministers. *Bali* gradually acquired the sense of an oppressive impost, and the collectors of *bali* were apparently classed with man-eating demons. Among other royal dues, mention may be made of "milk-money", payable by the people when an heir was born to the king, and taxes and octroi duties paid by merchants. The ruler also imposed at times forced labour and claimed the right to dispose of forest land and unowned property.

About the kingless States or republics our information is mainly derived from Buddhist and Greek sources, though some details are given by the Sanskrit epics and works on polity as well as the sacred literature of the Jainas. Coins and inscriptions are not of much help for our period. The word for a republic was *Saṁgha* or *Gaṇa*, but the terms were also applied to religious fraternities and economic corporations. Like monarchies, the republics, too, were not all of the same type. Some were tribal oligarchies, others are expressly mentioned as having a democratic constitution. Some of these States embraced several clans, others were limited to single *Kulas* or even cities. Some were sovereign States owning no allegiance to any external authority. Others did homage to some neighbouring potentate, though enjoying a considerable degree of local autonomy. There were, however, certain features common to all. Each had its *parishad* or assembly which met in the *saṁsthāgāra* or mote-hall where young and old alike were

present. According to a high authority, the method of procedure generally adopted in the tribal meetings was not by voting on a motion. The point at issue was either carried unanimously or referred for arbitration to a committee of referees. Besides the central assembly at the capital, there were local *parishads* in all the more important places in the State. The citizens honoured and esteemed the *Mahallakas* or elders and held it a point of duty to hearken to their words. Executive government was in the hands of a single chief or a number of chiefs styled *Rājan*, *Gaṇa rājan* or *Saṁghamukhya*, corresponding to the Roman consul or Greek archon. The *Rājās* or *Saṁghamukhyas* were either identical with the *Mahallakas* or selected from them. The title *Rājan* was sometimes loosely applied to all the chief men of the State, for we hear of 7,707 *Rājās* among the *Lichchhavis*, though one document puts the figure at 500 and a Jaina text seems to limit the title to only nine. A Buddhist commentary seems to suggest that the *Rājās* ruled by turns. The number of elderly citizens eligible for the chief executive office probably fluctuated from time to time.

Besides the *Rājan* there were other functionaries styled *Uparājan* (vice-consul), *Senāpati* (general), *Bhāṇḍāgārika* (treasurer), etc. Tradition points to the existence of a succession of officials for the administration of criminal law in the Vṛijian State—the *Viniśchaya mahāmātra* (deciding magistrates), *Vyāvahārika* (lawyer-judge), *Sūtradhara* (canonist), *Ashṭakulika* (representative of the eight clans), *Senāpati* (general), *Uparājan* (vice-consul), and *Rājan* (consul). But the evidence is late and we do not know how far the procedure was actually followed in our period.

Social Life

With the Aryan expansion over practically the whole of India, came a wide diversity of social conditions. Customs not approved in the Gangetic Doāb were admitted as good usage in the north beyond the river Sarasvatī or the south beyond the Narmadā. Women, for example, enjoyed in southern India certain privileges denied to their mid-Indian sisters. The wife in the south was allowed to eat in the company of her husband, and restrictions on the marriage of cognates were not so strict in the south as in the north. Widow marriage and Levirate had not fallen into disuse even in the Ganges valley, and burning of widows was not sanctioned by the orthodox lawgivers. But the practice of *Satī* could not have been unknown in the north-west. In the epic we hear of the self-immolation of a princess born in the Madra

country in the Punjab, and Greek writers refer to the widow of an Indian commander who "departed to the pyre crowned with fillets by her women and decked out splendidly as for a wedding". A few polyandrous marriages are alluded to in the epic, but these were not sanctioned by general usage and must have been of very rare occurrence.

The picture of the woman in the Greek accounts, Buddhist discourses or epic tales does not always agree with that portrayed in the formal codes of law. The women of the *Dharma-Sūtras* were helpless beings who were always dependent on their male relations and were classed with properties of minors or sealed deposits. The women known to Alexander's contemporaries took the arms of their fallen relatives and fought side by side with the men against the enemy of their country. The epic matron exhorted her indolent son to "flare up like a torch, though it be but for a moment, but smother not like a fire of chaff just to prolong life". Education was not denied to women, some of whom are described as being widely known for their knowledge, learning, and dialectic skill. Buddhist texts refer to princesses who composed poems that are preserved in the *Therī-gāthā* or the Psalms of the Sisters. In several epic stories we find references to *svayamvara* or choice of a husband by the bride herself, and in a famous episode of the *Mahābhārata* a king asked his daughter to choose a husband and said that he would give her the man of her choice. Seclusion of women was practised in certain families, but many of the epic tales bear witness to a freer life where women laid aside their veils and came out of the seclusion of their houses. This was specially the case on the occasion of a great national festival or sorrow. "Women should not be slain," says one great epic poet. "A wife is half the man," says another, and adds that

> "Whene'er we suffer pain and grief
> Like mothers kind they bring relief."

The common people mostly lived in villages in humble dwellings made of thatch which were sometimes mud-plastered for fear of fire. Kings resided in fortified towns (*pur*) or cities (*nagara*) provided with lofty walls, strong ramparts, watch-towers and gates. These cities contained pleasure parks, streets lighted with torches and watered, assembly halls, dancing halls, gambling houses, courts of justice, booths for traders and work-places of artisans. The number of big cities was not large. Early Buddhist texts refer to six such places—Champā (near Bhagalpur), Rājagṛiha (in the

Patna district), Śrāvastī (Saheṭh-Maheṭh), Sāketa (Oudh), Kauśāmbī (near Allahābād), and Benares—as flourishing in the days of the Buddha. Taxila is omitted in this list, either because it had not yet risen to greatness or because it was far away in the north-west. The city of Pāṭaliputra was founded after the death of the sage of the Śākyas. One of the capital cities, that of a kingless State, is expressly mentioned as a "little wattle and daub town", "a branch township" surrounded by jungles.

The royal residence in the Brāhmaṇical Sūtras is a modest structure probably built of wood. Buddhist texts refer to a palace of stone, but it was in fairyland. They also mention buildings of seven storeys in height (*sapta bhūmaka prāsāda*). It is suggested by a high authority that in early times the superstructure at least of all dwellings was either woodwork or brickwork. But certain texts refer to workers in stone who built houses with material from the ruins of a former village. The imperial palace described in the epic is a noble mansion made of stone and metal and provided with arches and roofs supported by a thousand pillars.

The inner court of the palace contained playgrounds with flowers and fountains where the women amused themselves. Little princesses had their dolls, *pañchālikā*. They also played with a ball, *kanduka*, while the boys sported with a ball or hockey (*viṭā*), which they rolled or tossed about. The usual recreations of women were singing, dancing and music. There was a dancing hall attached to almost every palace. Men, too, are represented by Greek authors as being very fond of singing and dancing. But the chief pastimes of knights were gambling, hunting, listening to tales of war, and tournaments in amphitheatres surrounded by platforms for spectators. Buddhist texts refer to acrobatic feats, combats of animals and a kind of primitive chess play.

The dress of the people of the Indus valley consisted of a tunic made of cotton and two other pieces of stuff, one thrown about their shoulders and the other twisted round their heads. Men wore ear-rings and dyed their beards. They used umbrellas and shoes. Women of the aristocratic class were decked with golden stars about their heads and a multitude of necklets and bangles set with precious gems. Girls of the same classes in the Gangetic region also wore necklaces besides waist-bands and anklets adorned with bells. They were gaudily attired in linen or yellow or red silk.

The early epic warrior did not feel much compunction in taking meat, but in the later epic the slaughter of animals in the manner of the Kshatriyas is regarded as cruel and ghoulish. The growing

feeling of pity for animate beings is reflected in the exhortation "don't kill the guiltless cow", and the practice of substituting images of animals made out of meal for real living creatures. The ordinary fare of the Indians of the north-west borderland, according to Greek observers, consisted of pulpy rice and seasoned meat. These were served up on a gold dish placed on a table. The drinking of wine was not widely prevalent except on the occasion of religious festivals. People in upper Sind had a kind of Lacedaemonian common meal where they ate in public. Their food consisted of what was taken in the chase.

Social distinctions were becoming rigid, though the epic philosophers declared that "There was no distinction of caste. The whole of this universe was divine, having emanated from *Brahman*. Created equally by the supreme spirit men had on account of their deeds been divided into various castes". The Greek writers note at the end of this period that the custom of the country prohibited intermarriage between the castes. Custom also prohibited anyone from exercising two trades, or from changing from one caste to another. The sophist only could come from any caste. Brāhmaṇical lawgivers developed the theory of defilement and laid a ban on certain kinds of food as being intrinsically unfit for consumption by the twice-born or upper castes. Others, when defiled by the touch of certain classes of men and women, were regarded as impure. The theory of mixed castes is produced so as to explain the presence of new communities like the *Yavanas*. But such a theory tacitly admits that intermarriage between the castes did take place, and was legally recognised, though it was looked upon with disfavour by some of the law-givers. Legal maxims were counsels of perfection which were not always followed in practice. Greek historians refer to the matrimonial alliance between an Indian king and a Greek potentate. They also draw attention to the political activities and militancy of the Brāhmaṇas in the lower Indus valley, and allude to the rise of a dynasty of barber origin in the valley of the Ganges. Purāṇic writers refer to marriages of Kshatriya kings with Śūdra women and the assumption of royal authority by the Śūdras. Cases of intermarriage between castes and change of caste and occupation are also found in the epic. An epic king marries a Brāhmaṇa girl. A Kshatriya prince is promoted to the rank of a Brāhmaṇa. A Brāhmaṇa warrior leads the Kuru host against the Pāṇḍus and chieftains of the Pañchāla country. A Kshatriya prince does not hesitate to embrace a Nishāda whom he calls his friend, and takes food from a Śavara woman who has already served several sages.

Buddhist writers acknowledge the existence of the four *varṇas* and numerous degraded tribes and low trades (*hīnajāti* and *hīna-śilpa*) besides aboriginal peoples, outcastes and slaves. They refer to pride of birth and taboos on intermarriage and inter-dining, especially with slave girls and outcastes. But they give the palm to the Kshatriya and, like some epic poets, usually regard character, and not birth or ceremonial purity, as the true test of caste. Like the epic poets again, they refer to a certain elasticity of caste rules in the matter of *connubium*, commensality and change of calling. Brāhmaṇas took wives from royal houses. Princes, priests and pedlars ate together and intermarried. Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas took to trade and menial work. Weavers became archers. It is clear that social divisions and economic occupations did not exactly coincide, though the texts testify to a natural predilection of artisans and traders for the ancestral calling.

Economic Condition

As already stated, the vast majority of the people seem to have preferred country life to residence in "towns covered with dust". The rural population consisted mainly of agriculturists and ranch-men, but we have also references to "craft villages" of carpenters, smiths and potters. Towns mainly attracted the ruling and commercial classes.

The simple rites of the *Gṛihya Sūtras*, such as "the furrow sacrifice" and "the threshing-floor sacrifice", testify to the importance of the agricultural population. The farmers lived in villages, the number of which was very large in every kingdom. Villages were largely autonomous, though under the suzerainty of the king who received certain dues that have already been specified above and sometimes claimed the right of appointing the head-man or officials who collected the village dues for him. The king's right to agricultural land was probably limited to a share of its produce. The king could remit the tithe due to the Government or make it over to anyone he wished to favour. But even royal officials scrupulously avoided encroachment upon the rights of the peasant householders (*gṛihapati*).

Nearchos refers to the cultivation of lands in the north-west by a whole kinship. Each individual took what he needed out of the produce and the remnant was destroyed to discourage sloth. In the Ganges valley, the arable land of the village (*grāma-kshetra*) was split up into plots held by heads of houses who managed their own holdings but co-operated for purposes of fencing

and irrigation under the guidance of the headman (*Bhojaka*, *Grāmika*). The holdings were usually small, but large estates farmed by Brāhmaṇas were known though they were very rare. The bigger holdings were to a great extent managed with the assistance of hired labour. Slaves were not kept in large numbers and were ordinarily employed as domestic servants.

The householders who had shares of the village field and constituted the village community have been described as peasant proprietors, but it is not clear whether they had any proprietary rights as against the community or could transfer their shares to outsiders. Sale or gift of land was not unknown in Oudh or South Bihār, but the recorded cases generally refer to big estates owned by priests or nobles, and not to the small holdings of the ordinary members of the village community.

The village peasants were a generally contented lot, and both men and women had the civic spirit to work for the common good. The result of co-operation was seen in the construction of reservoirs and the laying out of irrigation canals. In spite of their best endeavours, however, villagers could not escape famine for all time. The calamity, however, was not of frequent occurrence and, when it did come, its area was restricted.

The rural population included, besides the village agriculturists, a considerable body of ranchmen who tended cattle. They avoided towns and villages and lived in cattle-ranches styled *ghosha*. Some of the cowboys roamed about with their flocks in forests and on the mountains. The herdsman was frequently employed to guard the royal cattle and to take the flocks of the village folk to the common grazing field beyond the cultivated lands.

Handicraftsmen constituted a large part of the population both in rural and urban areas. The number of callings was large and included workers in stone and ivory and painters of frescoes. In some of the industries a considerable degree of specialisation was reached. They were also, to a large extent, localised and limited to particular families, for there was a general tendency among artisans for the son to follow the paternal calling. Eighteen of the more important crafts were organised into guilds (*Śreṇī*, *Pūga*), each of which was presided over by a *Pramukha* (foreman), *Jyeshṭhaka* (elder) or *Śreshṭhin* (chief). We sometimes hear of a *Mahāśreshṭhin* or supreme chief, and *Anuśreshṭhin* or deputy chief. Above all the guild officials stood the *Bhāṇḍāgārika* who combined the post of State Treasurer with supreme headship over all the *Śreṇīs*.

It is doubtful if the full guild organisation had spread to seamen and traders. Some of them had a *Jyeshṭhaka* (elder) or a

Sārthavāha (caravan-leader) and worked in union under a *Śreshṭhin*. But subordination to the leader or elder was not always in evidence, and merchants often plied their trade alone.

The range of activities of sailors and merchants in the period represented by the Pāli texts whose exact date is unknown was wide. We hear of sea-voyages and of trading journeys to the coast of Burma and the Malay world (*Suvarṇa-bhūmi*), Ceylon (*Tāmraparṇī*) and even to Babylon (*Baveru*). But navigators for the most part trafficked up and down the great rivers, especially the Indus, the Ganges and its tributaries. The principal sea-ports were Bhṛigukachcha (Broach), Śūrpāraka (Sopara, north of Bombay) and perhaps Tāmralipti (Tamluk in West Bengal). Of the riparian ports, Sahajāti (in Central India), Kauśāmbī on the Jumnā, Benares, Champā (near Bhagalpur), and latterly Pāṭaliputra on the Ganges and Pattala on the Indus deserve special mention. The great inland routes mostly radiated from Benares and Śrāvastī. One great highway connected the chief industrial and commercial centres of the Ganges valley with Central and Western Asia by way of the prosperous city of Taxila. Another stretched from Rājagṛiha in South Bihār by way of Śrāvastī in Oudh to the banks of the Godāvarī. Still another, and a far more difficult, route lay across the desert of Rājputāna to the ports of Sauvīra in the lower Indus valley and of the Upper Deccan near the mouth of the Narmadā. Adventurous merchants were guided along this route with difficulty by land-pilots who kept to the right track by observing the stars.

The chief articles of trade were silk, muslin, embroidery, ivory, jewellery and gold. The system of barter had not died out altogether, but the use of coins as the medium of exchange was becoming general. The standard unit of value was the copper *Kārshāpaṇa*, weighing a little more than 146 grains. Silver coins were also in circulation. King Āmbhi of Taxila presented Alexander with two hundred talents of coined silver. The weight of a silver Kārshāpaṇa, also called *Purāṇa* or *Dharaṇa*, was a little more than 58 grains, which is one-tenth of that of the *Nishka* or *Śatamāna* known to the Vedic texts. The weight and relative value of coins seem to have varied in different localities.

Religion

From the point of view of religion, the early days of the Magadhan ascendancy were among the most eventful in Indian history. Great changes took place within the fold of Brāhmaṇism. Old

ideas changed. New ones sprang into vigorous life. Popular cults and beliefs obtained recognition at the hands of the upper classes, and humanitarian and theistic movements gathered force and momentum as popular faith in animal sacrifice and barren ritual tended to diminish with the growth of free speculation presaged in the Upanishads. Outside the Brāhmaṇical Holy Land, spiritual leadership passed from the hands of priestly theologians and sacrificers to ascetics and wanderers (*Śramaṇa*, *Parivrājaka*) who laid the utmost stress on non-injury to living beings and the cessation of craving for the things of the world.

Greek references to the worship of Zeus Ombrios (Zeus of the rain-storms) probably suggest that the Vedic rain-gods like Indra and Parjanya were still honoured in North-West India. It is to be noted that the deities in question figure prominently in the ritual of the *Gṛihya Sūtras*. Parjanya finds mention also in the Buddhist *Suttantas*, which probably describe conditions in the north-east, but the place of Indra was there occupied by Śakra who is co-partner with Brahmā in the lordship over the gods. Brāhmaṇical texts refer to the growing popularity of Vaiśravaṇa, Kumāra (Kārttikeya), and the goddesses Umā-Haimavatī and Vaśinī who are regarded as different aspects of Durgā, the mother-goddess, consort of Śiva. Side by side with these divinities appear the spirits dwelling in waters, herbs, trees, etc. The mention of Vaiśravaṇa points to the influence of the *Yaksha* cult, the popularity of which is attested both by epic and Buddhist evidence. The cult of trees and of water deities like the Ganges is noted by Curtius and Strabo, and the idea of the *Kalpa-vṛiksha*, the tree which will give a man all he wants, occurs prominently in literature, including that of the Jainas.

Most of the deities are now thoroughly anthropomorphised and become quite human in dress, talk and action. With the growth of anthropomorphism came the increased use of images and the construction of temples for daily service. Icons were known to the ancient people of the lower Indus valley, and stray allusions to images have been traced in some Vedic texts. But the first undoubted historical reference to image-worship by an Aryan tribe occurs in a passage of Curtius, who states that an image of Herakles was carried in front of the Paurava army as it advanced against Alexander. Patanjali refers to the exhibition and sale of images of Śiva, Skanda, and Viśākha by the Mauryas who rose to power at the end of our period. Temples of a primitive kind are mentioned already in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, but these were not meant for

iconic worship. In the epic, however, we have clear references to temples sacred to deities.

Blood sacrifices were sometimes offered to some of the gods, but all our authorities bear testimony to a new feeling of pity for living beings. The *Mahābhārata* refers to the rescue by Pāṇḍu princes, led by Kṛishṇa, of hundreds of kings who were kept for sacrifice in the fortress of Girivraja "as mighty elephants are kept in mountain caves by the lion". The *Gṛihya Sūtras* prescribe rules for the substitution of images of meal at a sacrifice for real living creatures. Greek and Latin observers note that Brāhmaṇas do not eat the flesh of animals which help man in his labours. The remark undoubtedly confirms the Indian evidence regarding the growing feeling of reverence for the cow. The doctrine of *Ahiṁsā* or non-injury was specially inculcated by the ascetics and wanderers who had great influence over the people especially in Eastern India. An interesting glimpse of the ascetics of Taxila is afforded by the account of Onesikritos who accompanied Alexander to that city in 326 B.C.

Among the most important religious concepts of the period, a prominent place should be assigned to the doctrines of *Saṁsāra* and *Karma,* i.e. belief in repeated transmigration and the Law of the Deed. The whole world is conceived as a "perpetual process of creation, destruction and re-birth filling eternity with an ever-lasting rhythm", and the entire scheme is placed under the Law of *Karma* which secures that every individual shall reap the fruit of deeds performed in antecedent existences. "As a calf could recognise its mother among a thousand kine, so the deeds of the past would not fail to find out the doer." The operation of the Law might, however, be modified by the grace (*prasāda*) of the Lord, the Ordainer (*Īśvara, Dhātṛi*), combined with the loving faith (*Bhakti*) of the worshipper. This new doctrine is preached among others by the Vāsudevakas, later called *Bhāgavatas*. They teach *Bhakti* in Vāsudeva, also known as Kṛishṇa Devakīputra, who is identified in an Arāṇyaka with Vishṇu and Nārāyaṇa. We have already seen that the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* represents him as the disciple of a solar priest who declared righteous conduct to be as efficacious as fees given to a sacrificing priest. The epic refers to him as a prince of the Sātvata or Vṛishṇi clan of the Yādava tribe of Mathurā who put a stop to human sacrifice in Magadha and avenged insults to womanhood in the Kuru country. He is further represented as preaching the doctrines of *nishkāma Karma* (deed done without seeking any reward) and loving faith (*Bhakti*) in a God of Grace (*prasāda*). The religious and philosophical

views of his followers are expounded in the *Bhagavad Gītā* which forms part of the sixth book of the *Mahābhārata*. *Bhaktas* of Vāsudeva were known to Pāṇini, and are probably to be identified with the worshippers of the Indian Herakles whose cult was specially popular with the Śūrasenas of Mathurā in the fourth century B.C.

Rival sects also make their appearance, the most notable being the devotees of Śiva, later called the Śiva-Bhāgavatas, Māheśvaras or Pāśupatas. In one of the later Upanishads—the Śvetāśvatara —Śiva is the lord (Īśa or Īśāna) of the universe—the *Bhagavat* or the Blessed One, the object of devotion to the faithful. By devoting oneself to him, ignorance is dispelled, the nooses of death are snapped and eternal peace is attained.

The new theistic sects, though preserving their distinct individuality, did not break away altogether from Brāhmaṇism, and attempts at a synthesis were made in the epics and later literature whereby the gods of the Bhāgavatas and the Pāśupatas or Śiva-Bhāgavatas were recognised as emanations of the supreme divinity of Brāhmaṇism. This leads to the enunciation of the doctrine of *Trimūrti* which, in its mature form, belongs to a later age.

Eastern India saw the rise of a class of wandering teachers who, though believing in the doctrine of transmigration and *Karma*, rejected the authority of the Vedas and of Vedic priests, denounced the blood sacrifices that constituted so large a part of the Brāhmaṇic ritual, and even denied the existence of God and consequently the efficacy of divine grace. Right conduct, they declared, was the way of getting out of the meshes of *Karma* and *Saṁsāra*, and this right conduct included, among other things, the practice of *Ahiṁsā* or non-injury to living beings.

It is a notable fact that the greatest of the wandering teachers were, like the lord of the *Bhāgavatas*, scions of free Kshatriya clans hailing from the territory that lies on the fringe of the Brāhmaṇical Holy Land. One of them, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, belonged to the Jñātrika clan of Kuṇḍapura or Kuṇḍagrāma, a suburb of Vaiśālī in North Bihār. The other, Gautama Buddha, was a prince of the Śākya clan of Kapilavastu near Rummindei in the Nepāl Tarai.

Mahāvīra and Jainism

The parents of Mahāvīra were Siddhārtha, a Jñātrika chief of Kuṇḍapura, and Triśalā, a Kshatriya lady related to the ruling families of Vaiśālī and Magadha. The early life of Mahāvīra is veiled in obscurity. According to the tradition of the Śvetāmbara

(white-robed) Jainas, he married a princess named Yaśodā. He lived for some time the life of a pious householder, but forsook the world at the age of thirty. He roamed as a naked ascetic in several countries of eastern India and practised severe penance for twelve years. For half the period he lived with a mendicant friar named Gosāla who subsequently left him and became the leader of the *Ājīvika* sect. In the thirteenth year of his penance, Mahāvīra repaired to the northern bank of the river Rijupālikā outside Jṛimbhikagrāma, a little-known locality in eastern India, and attained the highest spiritual knowledge called *Kevala-jñāna*. He was now a *Kevalin* (omniscient), a *Jina* (conqueror) and *Mahāvīra* (the great hero). He became the head of a sect called Nirgranthas ("free from fetters"), known in later times as Jainas or followers of the Jina (conqueror). For thirty years he wandered about as a religious teacher and died at Pāvā in South Bihār at the age of seventy-two. The event is said to have happened 215 years before the Mauryas and 470 years before Vikrama. This is usually taken to refer to 528 B.C. But 468 B.C. is preferred by some modern scholars who rely on a tradition recorded by the Jaina monk Hemachandra that the interval between Mahāvīra's death and the accession of Chandragupta Maurya was 155, and not 215, years. The latter date does not accord with the explicit statement in some of the earliest Buddhist texts that Mahāvīra predeceased the Buddha. The earlier date is also beset with difficulties. In the first place, it is at variance with the testimony of Hemachandra, who places Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* only 155 years before Chandragupta Maurya. Again, some Jaina texts place the *Nirvāṇa* 470 years before the *birth* of Vikrama and not his *accession*, and as this event, according to the Jainas, did not coincide with the foundation of the era of 58 B.C. attributed to Vikrama, the date 528 B.C. for Mahāvīra's death can hardly be accepted as representing a unanimous tradition. Certain Jaina writers assume an interval of eighteen years between the *birth* of Vikrama and the foundation of the era attributed to him, and thereby seek to reconcile the Jaina tradition about the date of Mahāvīra's *Nirvāṇa* (58 + 18 + 470 = 546 B.C.) with the Ceylonese date of the Great Decease of the Buddha (544 B.C.). But the suggestion can hardly be said to rest on any reliable tradition. Merutuṅga places the death of the last *Jina* or *Tīrthaṅkara* 470 years before the end of Śaka rule and the *victory* and not *birth* of the traditional Vikrama. The date 528 B.C. for the *Nirvāṇa* of the Jñātrika teacher can to a certain extent be reconciled with the Cantonese date of the death of the Buddha (486 B.C.). But then we shall have to assume

that Mahāvīra died shortly after Buddha's enlightenment, forty-five years before the *Parinirvāṇa*, when the latter could hardly have become a renowned religious teacher of long standing as the Buddhist canonical texts would lead us to believe. Certain Jaina Sūtras seem to suggest that Mahāvīra died about sixteen years after the accession of Ajātaśatru and the commencement of his wars with his hostile neighbours. This would place the *Nirvāṇa* of the Jaina teacher eight years after the Buddha's death, as, according to the Ceylonese Chronicles, the Buddha died eight years after the enthronement of Ajātaśatru. The *Nirvāṇa* of the *Tīrthaṅkara* would, according to this view, fall in 478 B.C., if we accept the Cantonese reckoning (486 B.C.) as our basis, and in 536 B.C., if we prefer the Ceylonese epoch. The date 478 B.C. would almost coincide with that to which the testimony of Hemachandra leads us, and place the accession of Chandragupta Maurya in 323 B.C., which cannot be far from the truth. But the result in respect of Mahāvīra himself is at variance with the clear evidence of the Buddhist canonical texts which make the Buddha *survive* his Jñātrika rival. The Jaina statement that their *Tīrthaṅkara* died some sixteen years after the accession of Kūṇika (Ajātaśatru) can be reconciled with the Buddhist tradition about the death of the same teacher before the eighth year of Ajātaśatru if we assume that the Jainas, who refer to Kūṇika as ruler of Champā, begin their reckoning from the accession of that prince to the viceregal throne of Champā, while the Buddhists make the accession of Ajātaśatru to the royal throne of Rājagṛiha the basis of their calculation.

The Jainas believe that Mahāvīra was not the founder of a new religious system, but the last of a long succession of twenty-four *Tīrthaṅkaras* or "ford-makers across the stream of existence". The twenty-third teacher, Pārśva, the immediate predecessor of Mahāvīra, seems to have been a historical figure. He was a prince of Benares, and he enjoined on his disciples the four great vows of non-injury, truthfulness, abstention from stealing and non-attachment. To these Mahāvīra added the vow of *Brahmacharya* or continence. He also emphasised the need of discarding all external things, including garments, if complete freedom from bonds is to be attained. By following the three-fold path of Right Belief, Right Knowledge, and Right Conduct, souls will be released from transmigration and reach the pure and blissful abode (*Siddha Śilā*) which is the goal of Jaina aspiration. There is no place in Jainism for a supreme creative spirit. The doctrine of non-injury is given a wide extension by attributing souls not only to birds and beasts but also to plants, metals, water, etc.

According to the tradition of the *Śvetāmbara* Jainas, the original doctrine taught by Mahāvīra was contained in fourteen old texts styled *Pūrvas*. Towards the close of the fourth century B.C., when a famine in South Bihār led to the exodus of an important section of the Jainas, headed by Bhadrabāhu, to the Mysore country, those that remained behind in Pāṭaliputra convoked a council with a view to reviving the knowledge of the sacred texts which was passing into oblivion. The result was the compilation of the twelve *Aṅgas* which are regarded as the most important part of the Jaina canon. Another council was held at Valabhī in Gujarāt in the fifth or sixth century A.D. which made a final collection of the scriptures and reduced them to writing. The complete canon included not only the *Aṅgas*, but sundry other treatises styled *Upāṅga*, *Mūla Sūtra*, etc.

The followers of Bhadrabāhu, on their return to the north, refused to acknowledge the canon as drawn up by their co-religionists at home, who came to be known as *Śvetāmbaras* (clad in white) as they wore white garments notwithstanding the injunctions of Mahāvīra. Those who continued to follow scrupulously the directions of the famous Jñātrika teacher regarding nudity, came to be called *Digambaras* (sky-clad or naked). The division of the Jaina Church into these two sects is at least as old as the first century A.D. But it may be much older, and some scholars find in the followers of Pārśva, the Tīrthaṅkara who immediately preceded Mahāvīra, the precursors of the Śvetāmbaras of later ages.

Gautama Buddha

Among the notable contemporaries of Mahāvīra was a wandering teacher who belonged to the Śākya clan of Kapilavastu in the Nepāl Tarai to the north of the Basti district of the United Provinces. His name was Siddhārtha and he belonged to the Gautama *gotra* or family. He was born in the village of Lumbini-grāma near Kapilavastu about the year 566 B.C. according to the system of chronology adopted in these pages. The site of his nativity is marked by the celebrated Rummindeī Pillar of Aśoka Maurya. He was the son of Śuddhodana, a Rājā or noble of Kapilavastu, and of Māyā, a princess of Devadaha, a small town in the Śākya territory. Māyā died in child-birth and the little Siddhārtha was brought up by his aunt and stepmother P(r)ajāpatī Gautamī. At the age of sixteen the prince was married to a lady known to tradition as Bhadda Kachchānā, Yaśodharā, Subhadrakā, Bimbā or Gopā, whom some authorities represent as a niece of

Māyā. After his marriage, Siddhārtha grew up amidst the luxurious surroundings of the palace till at last the vision of old age, disease and death made him realise the hollowness of worldly pleasure. He felt powerfully attracted by the calm serenity of the passionless recluse, and the birth of a son, Rāhula, made him decide to leave his home and family at once. The Great Renunciation took place when Siddhārtha reached the age of twenty-nine. For six years he lived as a homeless ascetic, seeking instruction under two religious teachers and visiting many places including Rājagṛiha, in the Patna district, and Uruvilva, near Gayā. At Uruvilva he practised the most rigid austerities only to find that they were of no help to him in reaching his goal. He then took a bath in the stream of the river Nairanjanā, modern Lilajan, and sat under a *pipal* tree at modern Bodh-Gayā. Here at last he attained unto supreme knowledge and insight and became known as the *Buddha* or the Enlightened One, Tathāgata ("he who had attained the truth") and Śākya-muni or the sage of the Śākya clan.

The Enlightened One now proceeded to the Deer Park near Sarnath in the neighbourhood of Benares and began to preach his doctrine. For forty-five years he roamed about as a wandering teacher and proclaimed his gospel to the princes and people of Oudh, Bihār and some adjoining territories. He laid the foundation of the Buddhist Order of monks (*Saṅgha*) and received important gifts of groves and monasteries from friendly rulers and citizens. Among his converts was his cousin Devadatta who subsequently broke away from him and founded a rival sect that survived in parts of Oudh and Western Bengal till the Gupta period. The Buddha is said to have died at the age of eighty at Kuśīnagara, modern Kasia in the Gorakhpur district of the United Provinces. The date of his Great Decease (*Parinirvāṇa*) is a subject of keen controversy. If the Ceylonese tradition that 218 years intervened between the *Parinirvāṇa* and the consecration of *Priyadarśana* (Aśoka) has any value, the date cannot be far removed from 486 B.C., the starting-point of the famous "dotted record" at Canton.

Buddha taught his followers the four "Noble Truths" (*Ārya Satya*) concerning suffering, the cause of suffering, the destruction of suffering and the way that leads to the destruction of sorrow. That way did not lie either in habitual practice of sensuality or in habitual practice of self-torture. There was a "Middle Path" called the "Noble Eightfold-path", that is to say, Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Contemplation. This

was the path that "opened the eyes, bestowed understanding, led to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvāṇa". Nirvāṇa literally means "the blowing out" or extinction of craving, of the desire for existence in all its forms, and the consequent cessation of suffering. But it is not mere extinction. It is a tranquil state to be realised by one who "from all craving want was free".

In his last exhortation to his disciples just on the eve of his death, the Buddha said, "Decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your salvation with diligence (*apramāda*)."

The striving for salvation requires in the first place the observance of the *Śīlas* or Moralities, that is to say, abandonment of killing, stealing, incontinence, falsehood, slander, luxury, hankering for wealth, performance of blood sacrifices, the worship of the Sun, or of Brahmā and sundry other practices. The next requisite is *Samādhi* or concentration, and finally *Prajñā* or insight. These ultimately lead to *Sambodhi* (enlightenment) and *Nirvāṇa*.

The Buddhists shared with their fellow-countrymen of other persuasions, including the Brāhmaṇical Hindus and the Jainas, the belief in *Saṁsāra* (transmigration) and *Karma* (retribution for the deed done). Like the Jainas, they rejected the authority of the Vedas, condemned blood sacrifices, denied or doubted the existence of a supreme creative spirit, and inculcated reverence for saints who, from their point of view, attained to supreme knowledge. But unlike the followers of the Jñātrika teacher they did not acknowledge a permanent entity or an immortal soul, were not convinced of the efficacy of discarding garments, and considered rigid penance to be as useless as indulgence in sensual pleasure. The disciples of Mahāvīra on the other hand, endowed even plants, metals, water and air with souls and gave a wide extension to the doctrine of non-violence. They considered all external things, including garments, to be an impediment to spiritual progress, and believed that the ideal man should lead a life of rigid austerities, putting up with all sorts of torments and tribulations, never seeking any relief. The saints and prophets of Jainism were of a different type from the saints and prophets of Buddhism, and the Jainas did not altogether dispense with the worship of the old deities or the services of the Brāhmaṇas.

Buddhist Scriptures

The unanimous tradition of all Buddhist schools records that shortly after the death of the Master a great Council (*Saṅgīti*)

was held at Rājagṛiha to compile the *Dharma* (religious doctrine) and the *Vinaya* (monastic code). A century later a dispute arose regarding the code of discipline as the monks of Vaiśālī wanted a relaxation of the rules in respect of ten points. A second council was convoked at Vaiśālī which condemned the ten heresies and revised the scriptures. A fresh condemnation of heresy is said to have taken place in the reign of Aśoka Maurya, under whose patronage a third council was summoned at Pāṭaliputra by a learned monk, Tissa Moggaliputta, 236 years after the death of the Buddha, to make a final compilation of the scriptures. The council of Pāṭaliputra was probably not a plenary assembly of all Buddhists, but a party meeting of the school of *Vibhajjavādins*. A fourth council was held under Kanishka which prepared elaborate commentaries (*Upadeśa Śāstras* and *Vibhāshā Śāstras*) on the sacred texts. This council was also not a general assembly but probably a gathering of only the *Hinayānists* of Northern India.

The tradition about some of the earlier councils is not accepted by all scholars. But the unanimity of tradition about the first two assemblies and Aśoka's decrees against heretical monks indicate that there must have been a substratum of truth behind the stories narrated by the Chroniclers. The canon as we have it at present may not be as old as the first or even the second council. One text, the *Kathāvatthu*, is admittedly a work of the third century B.C. But quotations from scriptures in the Aśokan edicts, and references to persons well read in the sacred texts in inscriptions of the second century B.C., suggest that works on doctrine and discipline were current before the rise of the Maurya and Śuṅga dynasties, though such works may not be exactly identical with any of the extant texts. According to the Ceylonese tradition, the sacred texts and commentaries were written down in books in the first century B.C. during the reign of King Vaṭṭagāmani Abhaya. In the fifth century A.D. the texts, as distinguished from the commentaries, came to be known as *Pāli*. The use of the term *Pāli* to denote the *language* in which the texts were written is not warranted by any early evidence. The *language* was called *Māgadhānām Nirutti* or the idiom of the people of Magadha, which was probably a dialect spoken in Magadha in the early days of Buddhism and which had ceased to be the current speech in the days of Aśoka who used a somewhat different idiom in his inscriptions.

The *Pāli* Canon is divided into three *Piṭakas* or baskets, viz. the *Sutta*, the *Vinaya*, and the *Abhidhamma*. The first consists of five *Nikāyas* or collections of *Suttas* or *Suttantas*, i.e. religious

discourses. The second contains rules of monastic discipline, and the third contains disquisitions of a philosophical character. The fifth *Nikāya* of the *Sutta-Piṭaka* includes the famous *Dhammapada*, the psalms of the brethren and of the sisters (*Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā*) and the still more celebrated *Jātakas* or Buddhist Birth Stories. The extant *Jātaka* commentaries belong to a period much later than the rise of the Maurya dynasty, but the original stories are fairly old and are often illustrated in bas-reliefs of the second and first centuries B.C. They were apparently not so well-known in the second as in the first century B.C. The *Jātakas* belong to a class of literature which foreshadows the epic, and there are indications that the epic itself was assuming coherent shape during the early days of the Magadhan ascendancy.

The Beginnings of Epic Poetry

In Vedic literature we come across lays in praise of heroes and tales about the deeds of princes and sages. These hero-lauds (*gāthā nārāśaṁsī*) and narrative stories (*ākhyāna*) formed an important feature of great sacrifices like the *Rājasūya* (royal consecration) and the *Aśvamedha* (horse-sacrifice). In the horse-sacrifice, a priest recited the *pariplava ākhyāna* (circling narrative) and tales of ancient kings, while a Kshatriya lute-player (*viṇā-gāthin*) sang to the lute extempore verses which referred to victories connected with the sacrificer. Among such sacrificers were many kings of the Kuru and Kosala realms. It is, therefore, not surprising that some of the most famous lays and tales found in the Vedic texts celebrated the benevolence and prowess of Kuru kings like Parikshit and Janamejaya, and of Ikshvāku and Kosalan monarchs like Hariśchandra and Para Āṭnāra. The narration of the Ākhyāna of the Ikshvāku Hariśchandra formed a part of the ritual of the *Rājasūya*, and another rite of the same sacrifice was connected with an important episode of Kuru history. The popularity of such stories is attested by Buddhist scriptures, and the Buddha strongly reprobated the practice of narrating tales of kings, of war, and of terror, in which certain Brāhmaṇas and even ascetics indulged. Some of the Ikshvāku and Kuru lays and tales centred round heroes not explicitly mentioned in the extant Vedic texts. One such story, that of Daśaratha and his son Rāma of the Ikshvāku family, is alluded to in the *Jātaka gāthās* and illustrated in bas-reliefs of the second century B.C. Another tale, that of the Pāṇḍus, is also known to the *Jātaka gāthās* and is hinted at by Greek writers of the fourth century B.C. in

the confused legends about the Indian Herakles and Pandia. Moreover, it is alluded to by the grammarians Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali. The last-mentioned writer also shows some acquaintance with the Kishkindhyā episode of the Rāma story. It is, however, difficult to say when the ballads about Rāma's adventures or the Pāṇḍus' victory first assumed the form of a full-fledged heroic *Kāvya* or epic. The names of Vālmiki and Vyāsa, son of Parāśara, the reputed authors of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the Pāṇḍu epic, the *Mahābhārata*, seem to occur in certain later Vedic or Vedāṅga texts. But the first dated reference to the *Rāmāyaṇa* as an epic is contained in the works of Buddhist and Jaina writers of the earliest centuries of the Christian era. But even then it contained only 12,000 verses, i.e. only half of its present size. The *Mahābhārata* is first mentioned by Āśvalāyana in his *Gṛihya Sūtra* and by Pāṇini in his *Ashṭādhyāyī*. It was admittedly at first only about a quarter of its present size. The complete *Mahābhārata* of 100,000 verses is mentioned for the first time in an inscription of the Gupta period. By the sixth century A.D. the fame of both the epics had spread to far-off Cambodia. Both the poems contain a good deal of pseudo-epic or didactic material which came to be included at a comparatively late date. The genuine epic refers to a powerful Magadhan military State with its capital at Girivraja. There is no reference to Pāṭaliputra. This probably points to a date before the later Haryaṅka-Śaiśunāga kings for the early epic. The age of the epic cannot be pushed much farther back because the knowledge, however inadequate, of Southern India beyond the Godāvarī, and of Eastern India beyond the land of the Puṇḍras and the Vaṅgas, betrays a geographical outlook that is distinctly wider than that of the entire Vedic canon and the early Buddhist Nikāyas. Of the two ancient Sanskrit epics the *Rāmāyaṇa* is alluded to in, and was probably completed before, the *extant Mahābhārata*. But while the *Mahābhārata* was known to Āśvalāyana and Pāṇini, there is no similar early reference to the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The latter epic, moreover, mentions Janamejaya and "Vishnu who upraised a mountain with his hands", i.e. probably Kṛishṇa. The latest books refer to Vāsudeva of the Yadu family and his close associate, the incarnation of Nara, i.e. Arjuna.

The nucleus of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is the story of Rāma, the eldest son of Daśaratha, a prince of the Ikshvāku family of Ayodhyā in the Fyzabad district of Oudh. The prince married Sītā, the daughter of Janaka, king of Videha in North Bihār. Owing to a palace intrigue, the Ikshvāku prince had to leave his home and go into

exile for a period of fourteen years. He repaired to the Daṇḍaka forest in the Deccan with his wife and faithful half-brother Lakshmaṇa. He dwelt for some time on the banks of the Godāvarī in Pañchavaṭī, which is usually identified with Nāsik. Here he came into conflict with the *Rākshasas* or cannibal chieftains who were a source of disturbance to the peaceful hermits of the locality. Among the hostile chieftains were some persons closely related to Rāvaṇa, the mighty king of Laṅkā (Ceylon). That potentate sought to avenge his injured relations by carrying off Sītā, wife of Rāma, to his island home. In their distress, the Ikshvāku princes allied themselves with Sugrīva, Hanumān and other monkey chiefs of Kishkindhyā in the Bellary district of South India and crossed over to Laṅkā. They killed the *Rākshasa* king with most of his clan and rescued the princess Sītā. As the period of Rāma's exile was now over, he returned with his wife and brother to Ayodhyā where he was warmly received by his half-brother Bharata in whose favour he had been made to relinquish his rights. Meanwhile people came to question the propriety of taking back a princess who had long been kept confined by a *Rākshasa* king. To silence the unreasonable clamour of the multitude, Rāma had to banish his faithful consort, the ideal of Indian womanhood. The duty of a *Rājā*, according to Hindu notions, was always to please his subjects who were his "children". The virtuous royal lady found a shelter in the hermitage of Vālmiki, where she gave birth to the twins, Kuśa and Lava, who subsequently returned to their ancestral home and succeeded to their heritage.

It is difficult to say if there is any kernel of historical truth underneath this tale of a prince's adventures in the land of cannibals and monkeys. Rāma and Sītā are names met with in the Vedic literature, though not always as appellations of human beings. They are, however, in no way connected in the Vedic texts with the illustrious lines of the Ikshvākus or the Videhas. The name of Rāvaṇa is absolutely unknown to Brāhmaṇical or non-Brāhmaṇical literature till we come to the epics themselves or to works like the *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, which show acquaintance with the epics. It is, however, possible that Ikshvāku princes played a leading part in the colonisation of the Far South of India, as names of Ikshvāku kings figure prominently in the early inscriptions of Southern India. Whether the name of Ikshāvku was first popularised in the south by princes from Ayodhyā or by followers of the Śākya teacher of Kapilavastu, who also claimed Ikshvāku descent, must remain an open question.

The kernel of the *Mahābhārata* seems to be the victory of the

Pāṇḍus, helped by Kṛishṇa and the Pañchālas, over the Kurus proper, the sons of Dhṛitarāshṭra Vaichitravīrya, a king mentioned already in the *Kāṭhaka* recension of the *Yajur Veda*. The epic is often mentioned as the "tale of victory" (*Jayanāma itihāsa*). Of the leading figures on the side of the victors the name of one, Kṛishṇa, son of Vasudeva and Devakī, is mentioned in the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* and the latest book of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*. In the later text he is identified with the god Vishṇu or Nārāyaṇa. The name of another victor, Arjuna, is alluded to in the Vājasaneyi recension of the *Yajur Veda* and the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. In the *Brāhmaṇa* he is identified with Indra, and in the epic he is the son of Indra. But the *Brāhmaṇa* identification of Arjuna with Indra is on a par with the identification in the *Āraṇyaka* of Vāsudeva, i.e. Kṛishṇa, son of Vasudeva, with Vishṇu, and cannot be adduced to support the view that he was from the beginning nothing but a Brāhmaṇic god. The ruin of the Kurus is hinted at in the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* and one of the *Śrauta Sūtras*. Among their principal enemies were the *Sṛiñjayas*, and the Kuru hostility to this people is alluded to in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.

According to the story related in the *Mahābhārata*, King Vichitravīrya of Hāstinapura, in the Kuru country, identified with a place in the Meerut district, had sons named Dhṛitarāshṭra and Pāṇḍu. Dhṛitarāshṭra was born blind and hence Pāṇḍu succeeded to the throne. He died in the lifetime of his elder brother, leaving five sons, Yudhishṭhira, Bhīmasena, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. Dhṛitarāshṭra had more than a hundred children, of whom the eldest was Duryodhana. The sons of Pāṇḍu married Draupadī, daughter of the king of Pañchāla. The third prince, Arjuna, married also Subhadrā, sister to Kṛishṇa who belonged to the powerful Yādava confederacy of Mathurā and Dvārakā (in Kāṭhiāwār). The Pāṇḍus claimed a share of their paternal kingdom. They were given the Khāṇḍava forest to the south of the Kuru kingdom, where they built the stately city of Indraprastha near modern Delhi. At the instance of Kṛishṇa they overthrew Jarāsandha, the powerful king of Magadha, who was seeking to establish his own supremacy. The Magadhan ruler had carried off hundreds of princes as prisoners to the fastness of Girivraja with a view to offering them as victims in a horrid rite. The Pāṇḍus now effected conquests in all directions and laid claim to the rank of paramount rulers, performing the *Rājasūya*, which was now a sacrifice of imperial inauguration. The prosperity of their rivals roused the jealousy of the sons of Dhṛitarāshṭra. They invited

Yudhishṭhira, the eldest among the Pāṇḍu princes, to a game of dice, secured his defeat, and sought to enslave Draupadī. The Pāṇḍu queen was dragged to the open court and there subjected to the grossest insults. The Pāṇḍus were next sent into exile for a period of thirteen years. At the end of the period the five brothers demanded the return of their kingdom but met with a refusal. Thereupon the rival cousins engaged in a deadly conflict on the field of Kurukshetra. The Kuru host, led by Bhīshma, Droṇa, Karṇa and other mighty warriors, was destroyed. The Pāṇḍus with their allies, the Pañchālas and Sṛiñjayas, also suffered terrible losses, but they succeeded in gaining back their kingdom.

Although there is no clear reference in the extant Vedic texts to the battle of Kurukshetra, we have distinct hints in some of the *Brāhmaṇas*, *Upanishads* and *Śrauta Sūtras* of the hostility between the Kurus and the Sṛiñjayas, the disasters threatening the Kurus and their final expulsion from Kurukshetra. The name Pāṇḍu is not mentioned in Vedic literature, but we have references to Arjuna, Parikshit and Janamejaya, and the first two have already been deified in some of the later Vedic texts. That the Pāṇḍus were a historic tribe or clan is proved by the testimony of Ptolemy in whose time they occupied a portion of the Punjab.

Both the Kurus and the Pāṇḍus are frequently represented by epic bards as violating the knightly code of honour. The unchivalrous deeds of the Pāṇḍus are often attributed by the Kuru chronicler to the instigation of Kṛishṇa, just as the misdeeds of Ajātaśatru are ascribed by Buddhist writers to Devadatta, the schismatic cousin of the Buddha. The Buddha himself is accused by Purāṇic chroniclers of having beguiled the demons. The Bhāgavatas, the followers of Kṛishṇa, were not regarded as quite orthodox even in the time of Śaṅkarāchārya, and that may account for the attitude that a section of the Kuru bards adopted towards the Yādava chief, whom they regarded as a *vrātya* (outside the pale). It is difficult to believe that the great poets, philosophers and devoted worshippers who produced the *Bhagavad Gītā* and laid the utmost stress on the virtues of *dama* (self-restraint), *tyāga* (renunciation) and *apramāda* (vigilance) in an inscription of the second century B.C., could have been aware of the dark deeds that are attributed to their lord and his closest associates in battle-songs that find a place in the extant epic. That some of the battle-books were revised at a later period is proved by references to the Yavanas and the Śakas.

The *Mahābhārata* is not merely a "song of victory", it is a *Purāṇa-Saṁhitā*, a collection of old legends, and an *Itivṛitta* or

traditional account of high-souled kings and pious sages, of dutiful wives and beautiful maids. We have charming and edifying stories like those of Śakuntalā and Sāvitrī, of Nala and Śibi. Side by side with these we have the thrilling lays of Ambā and Vidulā. In the first book the epic claims to be a *Śāstra* or authoritative manual laying down rules of conduct for the attainment of *trivarga* or the three great aims animating all human conduct, *Dharma* (moral and religious duties), *Artha* (material wealth) and *Kāma* (pleasures of the flesh). Finally it claims to be a *Moksha-śāstra* pointing the way of salvation to mankind. Manuals of a didactic character are chiefly found in the later books. Among the religious poems that form part of the epic, the most famous is the *Bhagavad Gītā* or the "Song of the Lord", which constitutes the bed-rock of Hindu theism.

CHAPTER VII

THE MAURYA EMPIRE

Chandragupta Maurya

IN 326 B.C. India was faced with a crisis. The imperial crown of Magadha and the neighbouring provinces was worn by a king who was "detested and held cheap" by his own people. The Land of the Five Rivers was overrun by the Macedonians and allied peoples from the West who resolved to incorporate it permanently into their growing empire. Alexander, the great leader of the invading bands, withdrew, it is true, to the city of Babylon in Mesopotamia, where he died in 323 B.C. Philippos, the satrap whom he had appointed to govern the Western Punjab, met his doom in 324 B.C. But the surviving commanders, who met to partition the Macedonian empire in 323 B.C. and again in 321 B.C., had no desire to withdraw altogether from the conquered territories in the Indian borderland. The civil government of the districts to the east of the Indus had to be left virtually in the hands of Indian princes. Macedonian governors were retained in the trans-Indus satrapies, and an officer, named Eudemos, was appointed to command the garrison in the Western Punjab after the murder of Philippos. The successors of Alexander were, however, torn by internal dissensions and had to recall some of their commandants in India. The indigenous population had, in the meantime, found a leader who knew how to take advantage of the disunion and the thinned ranks of the foreign invaders and "shake the yoke of servitude from the neck" of his fatherland.

Signs of disaffection against foreign rule appeared in the Indian borderland as early as 326 B.C. when the Macedonian king was still in the Punjab. A formidable rising followed in the lower Indus valley which was fomented by the Brāhmaṇas of the locality. But all these insurrections seem to have been crushed, and the hand of the invader fell heavily on the instigators. Retribution came quickly and, if tradition is to be believed, it was a Taxilian Brāhmaṇa named Chāṇakya or Kauṭilya who raised to power the great avenger to whose mighty arms "the earth, long harassed by outlanders, now turned for protection and refuge".

The new Indian leader was a young man who bore the name of Chandragupta. He is described by Justin as a man of humble origin who was prompted to aspire to regal power by an omen significant of an august destiny, immediately after an encounter with Alexander himself. The visit to the Macedonian king is referred to by Plutarch as well as Justin, but, strange to say, some modern writers emend the text of Justin and propose to read "Nandrum" (Nanda) in place of Alexandrum (Alexander). Such conjectural emendations are hardly justified. They mislead the unwary student of Mauryan antiquities.

The family to which the young leader belonged is named Maurya by Indian writers, and is identified by some with the tribe of Morieis mentioned by the Greeks. According to one tradition the designation is derived from Murā, the mother or grandmother of Chandragupta, who was the wife of a Nanda king. Mediaeval epigraphs, on the other hand, represent the Mauryas as Kshatriyas of the solar race. Buddhist writers of an early date also knew them as members of the Kshatriya caste and referred to them as the ruling clan of the little republic of Pipphalivana, probably lying between Rummindeī in the Nepalese Tarai and Kasai in the Gorakhpur district, in the days of the Buddha. The cognomen *Vṛishala* applied to Chandragupta in the Sanskrit play called the *Mudrārākshasa* does not invariably mean a man of *Śūdra* extraction. It is also used of Kshatriyas and others who deviated from rules enjoined in Brāhmaṇical scriptures. That Chandragupta did deviate from Brāhmaṇical orthodoxy is proved by his matrimonial alliance with Seleukos and the predilection shown for Jainism in his later years.

The Maurya clan was reduced to great straits in the fourth century B.C., and tradition avers that Chandragupta grew up among peacock-tamers, herdsmen, and hunters. While still a lad he met Alexander in the Punjab, but, having offended the king by his boldness of speech, and orders being given to kill him, he saved himself by a speedy flight. In the place of his refuge he is said to have been joined by a personage who had left his home in Taxila. This was the famous Chāṇakya or Kauṭilya, who went at first to Pāṭaliputra but, being insulted by the reigning Nanda king, repaired to the Vindhya forest where he met Chandragupta. With the help of treasure found underground he gathered an army for the young Maurya. Greek and Latin writers do not mention Kauṭilya but allude to Chandragupta's encounter with a lion and an elephant, which accords well with his residence in the Vindhyan wilds, and refer to the collection of a body of armed men who are characterised as a band of robbers by some modern

historians. But the original expression used by Justin, to whom we owe the account of the rise of Chandragupta, has the sense of "mercenary soldier" as well as that of "robber". The former sense is in consonance with Jaina tradition.

Having collected an army, Chandragupta "solicited the Indians to support his new sovereignty", or, according to another interpretation, "instigated the Indians to overthrow the existing government". *Thereafter* (*deinde*) he went to war with the prefects of Alexander and fought vigorously with them. Chandragupta acquired the throne when Seleukos, a general of Alexander, was laying the foundations of his future greatness. Seleukos obtained as his share of Alexander's empire the satrapy of Babylon, first after the agreement of Triparadeisos (321 B.C.) and afterwards in 312 B.C., from which year his era is dated. In 306 B.C. he assumed the title of king. As Chandragupta had acquired the throne when Seleukos was on the threshold of his career, his accession took place certainly before 306 B.C. and probably before 312 B.C. It may have taken place even before 321 B.C. The Buddhist tradition of Ceylon puts the date 162 years after the *Parinirvāṇa* of the Buddha, i.e. in 382 B.C. if we take 544 B.C. to be the year of the Great Decease and 324 B.C. if we prefer the Cantonese date 486 B.C. for the death of the Buddha. The earlier date is opposed to Greek evidence and is clearly untenable. The date 324 B.C. accords with the testimony of Greek writers.

A Jaina tradition fixes the date of Chandragupta's accession at 313 B.C. It is, however, difficult to reconcile this tradition with the statement of the Buddhist chroniclers of Ceylon and Burma that the coronation of Aśoka took place 24+27 (or 28)+4=55 or 56 years after the accession of Chandragupta. The Purāṇas agree with the Buddhist chronicles in assigning a period of 24 years to Chandragupta. They give a smaller figure, 25, instead of the 28 of the Buddhist chroniclers of Ceylon and the 27 of the chroniclers of Burma, for the reign of Bindusāra and ignore the interval between the accession and coronation of Aśoka. But, as pointed out by Smith, they assign 137 years to the Maurya dynasty. The total of the lengths of reigns, according to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, is, however, only 133. The difference of four years may be accounted for by the period of interregnum before the formal coronation of Aśoka. That emperor, in the thirteenth Rock Edict, mentions certain Yavana (Hellenic) kings as being alive. This must have been written after the twelfth year from his coronation, when he caused rescripts of morality to be written apparently for the first time. Among these Yavana kings there is no reference to Diodotos I

of Bactria, who rose to power in the middle of the third century B.C. Magas of Cyrene, one of the kings named by Aśoka, died, according to the best authorities, not later than 258 B.C. His successor, Demetrios the Fair, is said to have met his death in that year. If 258 B.C. is the latest possible date for the thirteenth Rock Edict, the coronation of Aśoka must have taken place certainly not later than 269 B.C. The accession of Chandragupta must have taken place, according to Buddhist evidence, not later than 269+55=324 B.C. and, according to the Purāṇic statements, not later than 269+25+24=318 B.C., or, including the period of interregnum before Aśoka, not later than 322 B.C.

In the account of the rise of Chandragupta given by Justin, we are expressly told that the young Indian leader was stimulated to aspire to kingship by an incident that happened immediately after his flight from the camp of Alexander in 326 B.C. The use of the term *deinde* ("thereafter", "some time after") in connection with the war against the prefects of Alexander suggests that the acquiescence of Indians in a change of government and the establishment of a new sovereignty is quite distinct from the war with the Macedonian prefects. There was an interval between the two events, and the Macedonian war came some time after the change of government among Indians.

In the Sanskrit play, the *Mudrārākshasa*, too, the destruction of the *Mlechchha* (barbarian) chieftains and troops follows the dynastic revolution in the interior of India. In 321 B.C. the Macedonian governor of Sind had already been forced to retire beyond the Indus, and no new satrap had been appointed in his place. The successors of Alexander in 321 B.C. confessed their inability to remove the Indian Rājās without royal troops under the command of some distinguished general. The abandonment of Sind, the complaint about the inadequacy of troops, and the wholesome respect for the power of the Indian Rājās, must have been due to new developments in politics. Greek military power to the east of the Indus was virtually extinguished as early as 321 B.C. The result could not have been due to Āmbhi, the Paurava, or any petty Rājā who had once acknowledged the Macedonian sway. Had they been instrumental in freeing their country from the foreign yoke, they and not Chandragupta and his band of mercenaries would have been mentioned by Justin as the great liberators. Moreover, if the destruction or expulsion of Greek commanders had already been effected by Āmbhi or the Paurava, then whence had come the prefects against whom Chandragupta went to war and fought so vigorously, as narrated by Justin?

It is true that Chandragupta is not mentioned in connection with the partition treaties of Babylon and Triparadeisos. But we have a similar reticence in regard to Eudemos, the Yavana commandant in the Western Punjab who stuck to his post up to about 317 B.C. The presence of this officer and that of his Indian colleagues does not preclude the possibility of the assumption of sovereignty by Chandragupta in the lower Indus valley or the plains and uplands of the Indian interior some time before 321 B.C.

Tradition avers that in overthrowing the iniquitous rule of the last Nanda, Chandragupta was greatly helped by the Brāhmaṇa Kauṭilya or Chāṇakya who became his chief minister. A direct attack on the heart of the Nanda empire is said to have failed. Next time the young Maurya is said to have commenced from the frontiers and met with success. The Nanda troops, led by the general Bhadrasāla, were defeated with great slaughter, and Chandragupta seized the sovereignty of Pāṭaliputra.

The first Maurya is known to have been in possession of Mālwa and Kāṭhiāwār. The Jaina date, 313 B.C., if based on a correct tradition, may refer to his acquisition of Avanti (Mālwa). Westward of Avanti, Chandragupta's rule extended as far as Surāshṭra in which was stationed a *Vaiśya* official (*rāshṭriya*) named Pushyagupta. Tamil tradition refers to the advance of "Maurya upstarts" as far south as the Tinnevelly district. But the achievement is attributed by certain scholars to the Mauryas of the Konkan who belong to a much later date. Even if the earlier Mauryas had really pushed on to Tinnevelly they must have withdrawn from this region within a short time, because the southern frontier of the Maurya empire in the days of Aśoka, grandson of Chandragupta, did not extend beyond the Chitaldrug district of Mysore, and the Pāṇḍya realm which included the Tinnevelly district is referred to in the edicts of that emperor as a frontier kingdom.

Towards the close of the reign of Chandragupta, the Maurya empire received a further extension in the north-west. Seleukos, the general of Alexander, who had made himself master of Babylon, gradually extended his empire from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indus and even tried to regain the provinces to the east of that river. He failed and had to conclude a treaty with Chandragupta by which he surrendered a large territory including, in the opinion of certain writers, the satrapies of Paropanisadai (Kābul), Aria (Herāt), Arachosia (Qandahār), and Gedrosia (Baluchistān), in return for 500 elephants. The inclusion of a part at least of the Kābul valley within the Maurya empire is attested by the evidence of the Aśokan inscriptions. The treaty was cemented

by a marriage contract. A Greek envoy was accredited to the Court of Pāṭaliputra.

If Jaina tradition is to be believed, Chandragupta was converted to the religion of Mahāvīra. He is said to have abdicated his throne and passed his last days at Śravaṇa Belgola in Mysore. Greek evidence, however, suggests that the first Maurya did not give up the performance of sacrificial rites and was far from following the Jaina creed of *Ahiṁsā* or non-injury to animals. He took delight in hunting, a practice that was continued by his son and was also alluded to by his grandson Aśoka in the eighth Rock Edict. It is, however, possible that in his last days he showed some predilection for Jainism just as Harsha in the seventh century A.D., though officially a Śaiva, paid respect to the Buddha and the Buddhist Master of the Law.

Bindusāra

The successor of Chandragupta Maurya was his son Bindusāra, apparently called *Amitraghāta*, "slayer of foes", by Greek writers. As Chandragupta's accession could not have taken place before 326 B.C., and as Brāhmaṇical as well as Buddhist writers unanimously assign a period of twenty-four years to his reign, the new king could not have come to the throne before 302 B.C. His reign must have terminated before 269 B.C. if the king Magas, mentioned in the thirteenth Rock Edict of his son Aśoka, really died in 258 B.C. The actual period of his rule is not known for certain. According to Purāṇic writers, he reigned for twenty-five years. Burmese tradition allots to him a period of twenty-seven years, while Ceylonese chroniclers fix the length of his reign at twenty-eight years. If the Cantonese date for the Buddha's *Nirvāṇa* (486 B.C.) be accepted, then he must have reigned from *c.* 300 B.C. to *c.* 273 B.C.

Bindusāra seems to have retained undiminished the empire of his father. Tradition credits him with the suppression of a revolt in Taxila. Whether he effected any new conquests is not known for certain. His empire must have embraced not only the greater part of northern India but also a considerable portion of the Deccan, probably as far south as the Chitaldrug district of Mysore. The kingdom of Kaliṅga, embracing the major part of Puri, Ganjam and some adjoining tracts, is known, however, to have been independent.

In foreign affairs Bindusāra maintained the friendly relations with the Hellenic West established by his father. He received as ambassador a Greek named Deimachos and curious anecdotes have

been preserved of private friendly correspondence between him and Antiochos I Soter, king of Syria, son of Seleukos Nikator.

Bindusāra had many children, both sons and daughters. One of the sons, Aśoka, seems to have held successively the important viceroyalties of Taxila and Ujjain. Tradition avers that when the emperor fell sick Aśoka left the government of Ujjain and came to Pāṭaliputra, the imperial capital. When his father died, he seized the sovereignty of the city, and put his eldest brother to death. He is said to have slain ninety-nine brothers born of different mothers. In the fifth Rock Edict, however, which was issued not earlier than the fourteenth regnal year, Aśoka refers to the harems of his brothers which were objects of his anxious care. This has been taken to indicate that the story of the slaughter of the brothers is a silly fiction, but we have to remember that the formal consecration of Aśoka was very probably delayed. This suggests a disputed succession. The fifth Rock Edict undoubtedly proves the existence of harems of brothers thirteen years after Aśoka's anointment, but it does not prove that the brothers themselves *without any exception* were all alive at that date. The traditional account may not be correct in all particulars, and the number of brothers killed may have been exaggerated, but that there was a fight for the crown, in the course of which the eldest brother perished, does not appear to be altogether improbable. Aśoka himself refers in the fourth Rock Edict to the growth for a long period past of unseemly behaviour to relatives. This unseemly behaviour was only stopped when feelings of remorse were awakened in his breast after the blood-bath of the Kaliṅga war.

Aśoka

The reign of Bindusāra probably terminated in, or within a few years of, 273 B.C. Some time after—four years later according to tradition—his successor was solemnly enthroned at Pāṭaliputra and died after a reign of thirty-six or thirty-seven years, in or about 232 B.C. The name of the new king as known from literature, the Maski edict, and certain later epigraphs, was Aśoka. He is generally mentioned in his inscriptions as Devānaṁpiya Piyadasi. Devānaṁpiya, "beloved of the gods", is a title which he shared with some of his predecessors, successors and contemporaries. The other appellation Piyadasi (Priyadarśin) or Piyadassana (Priyadarśana), "of amiable appearance", is said to have been borne also by his grandfather Chandragupta. The form Piyadassana (Priyadarśana) occurs in literature and the famous Aramaic

inscription from Taxila which may have referred to his reign if not to that of his grandfather.

We know very little about the early years of Aśoka's reign. He must have continued the aggressive policy of his forebears. Literary tradition credits him with the suppression of a fresh revolt in Taxila, and a contemporary inscription records that when he had been anointed eight years the Kaliṅgas were conquered by him. The conquest of this province rounded off the Maurya empire, which now embraced almost the whole of non-Tamil India and a considerable portion of Afghānistān. It stretched from the land of the Yonas, Kambojas and Gandhāras in the Kābul valley and some adjoining mountain territory, to the country of the Andhras in the Godāvarī-Kṛishṇā basin and the district (Āhāra) of Isila in the north of Mysore, and from Sopārā and Girnār in the west to Dhauli and Jaugaḍa in the east. In the north-west, the empire touched the realm of Antiochos II, the Greek king of Syria and Western Asia, and in the south it extended as far as the kingdom of the Choḍas, Pāṇḍyas, Satiyaputra and Keralaputra in the Tamil country. If tradition is to be believed, the dominions of Aśoka included the secluded vales of Kāshmīr and Nepāl as well as the riparian plains of Puṇḍravardhana (North Bengal) and Samataṭa (East Bengal). The inclusion of the Himālayan valleys is rendered probable by the discovery of inscriptions at Mansehra in the Hazāra district, at Kālsi in the Dehra Dun district, at Nigāli Sāgar and Rummindeī in the Nepalese Tarai and at Rampurva in the Champaran district of North Bihār. But no recension of the Aśokan edicts has yet been found in Bengal, though an old Brāhmī inscription of Mahāsthān in North Bengal, which refers to the prosperous city of Puṇḍra-nagara, apparently belongs to the Pre-Christian Age.

The Kaliṅga war proved a turning-point in the career of Aśoka and produced results of far-reaching consequence in the history of India and of the whole eastern world. The sight of misery and bloodshed in the Kaliṅga campaign smote the emperor's conscience and awakened in his breast sincere feelings of repentance and sorrow. It made Aśoka intensely devoted to the practice of *Dharma* (morality and piety), the love of *Dharma* and the instruction of the people in *Dharma*. It also led to a momentous change in foreign policy. The emperor eschewed military conquest involving slaughter and deportation of people and evolved a policy of *dharma-vijaya*, "conquest by piety", in place of the old conquest by bows and arrows.

Aśoka had doubtless inherited the traditional devotion of Hindu kings to gods (*devas*) and the Brāhmaṇas, and, if the Kāshmīr

chronicle of Kalhaṇa is to be believed, his favourite deity was Śiva. Shortly after the Kaliṅga war he seems to have been greatly influenced by Buddhist teaching. He became a lay worshipper (*upāsaka*) of the Buddha, but for some time did not show much zeal for the new faith. He then went out to *Sambodhi*, taken by some to refer to Bodh-Gayā, and also established intimate relations with the Buddhist *Saṅgha* or order of monks. According to one view, he actually entered the *Saṅgha* and became a monk. Contact with the place of enlightenment of the Blessed One, and the pious fraternity that he had founded, apparently galvanised Aśoka into greater exertions for the cause of religion and morality. His new-born zeal showed itself in many ways. He made a deep study of the Buddhist scriptures and undertook "tours of morality" (*dharma-yātrā*) in the place of the pleasure tours (*vihāra-yātrā*) of his ancestors. In the course of these tours he visited the people of the country, instructing them in *Dharma* (morality and piety) and questioning them about *Dharma*. The royal preacher was highly pleased with the result of his tour. The sovereign was no longer to be seen only among litigants, priests, soldiers, and hunters of big game. The "Beloved of the Gods" had been among the country folk lecturing on *Dharma*. He had taught them that attainment of heaven is not the monopoly of the great alone. Even a lowly person could attain heaven if he was zealous in following the ancient rule of morality. At the end of 256 nights spent on tour, the emperor was satisfied that men in India and some adjoining tracts (Jambudvīpa), who had hitherto been unassociated with the gods, were now mingled with them. The royal tours were apparently decennial. One was undertaken when the king had been anointed ten years, and another when he had been consecrated twenty years. In course of the second tour, the emperor visited the birthplace of Śākya-muni and that of a previous Buddha, and worshipped at these holy spots.

The dominions of Aśoka were vast, and the royal preacher must have soon realised that with all his zeal it would not be possible for him alone to bring the message of *Dharma* to the doors of all his subjects in the remotest corners of his far-flung empire. When he had been anointed twelve years, that is to say within two years of his first tour, he requisitioned the services of important officials like the *Rajukas* (probably district judges and survey officers), *Prādeśikas* (apparently officers in provinces charged with revenue collection and police) and *Yuktas* (clerks or secretaries). He ordered his officers to publish rescripts on morality and set out on tours every five years to give instruction in morality as well

as for ordinary business. The rescripts and proclamations were to be engraved on rocks and on existing stone pillars. New "pillars of morality" (*dharma-stambha*) were also to be set up. These orders must have taxed the capacity of the officials to the utmost, and within a year the emperor felt the need of special functionaries whose sole business would be the promotion of religion. Accordingly, new officials, styled *Dharma-Mahāmātras* or high officers in charge of religion, were appointed. They were employed in the imperial capital as well as in the outlying towns and tribal territories, especially on the western and north-western border of the empire. They busied themselves with the affairs of all sects and of the people in various walks of life, including princes and princesses of the blood as well as prisoners in jail, ordinary householders and their servants as well as homeless ascetics. Reporters were posted everywhere to keep the king informed of the doings of his officials and subjects. The moral uplift and the welfare of the country folk were specially entrusted to functionaries styled *Rajukas* who had imperial agents to guide them. Envoys went out to foreign courts so that people outside the empire might conform to morality.

The old policy of chastisement of turbulent forest tribes and troublesome neighbours, and conquest by force of arms, was given up, and a new policy of peace and forbearance, of "conquest by morality", was evolved. "The reverberation of the war-drum" (*bheri ghoshạ*) was to become "the reverberation of the law" (*dhamma ghosha*). Not content with what he did himself, the emperor called upon his sons and other descendants not to think of fresh conquest, but to take pleasure in mercy and light punishment, and regard the "conquest by morality" as the only true conquest. Here we have a complete reversal of the old policy pursued by the rulers of Magadha since the days of Bimbisāra. Aśoka said that his policy of *dharma-vijaya* met with phenomenal success, and he claimed to have made a spiritual conquest of the realms of his Hellenistic, Tamil and Ceylonese neighbours. His Hellenistic contemporaries were Antiochos (II, Theos of Syria, 261–246 B.C.), Ptolemy (II, Philadelphos of Egypt, 285–247 B.C.), Antigonos (Gonatas of Macedonia, 276–239 B.C.), Magas (of Cyrene, *c.* 300–258 B.C.) and Alexander (of Epirus, 272–*c.* 255 B.C., or, as some say, of Corinth, 252–*c.* 244 B.C.). The Maurya emperor, it is true, established philanthropic institutions in the realms of some of these princes, and Buddhism doubtless made some progress in western Asia and influenced later sects like the Manichaeans. But the Greeks apparently were not much impressed by lessons on non-violence. When the strong arm of Aśoka, "who possessed

the power to punish in spite of his repentance", was withdrawn, the Greeks poured once more into the Kābul valley, the Punjab and even the Gangetic region and threw all these provinces into confusion.

The southern missions were more successful. If tradition is to be believed, the Ceylonese mission was headed by Prince Mahendra, a son or brother of Aśoka. Devānaṁpiya Tissa, the ruler of the island kingdom, was converted and his example was followed by his subjects. Ceylonese tradition avers that missionaries were sent even to Suvarṇa-bhūmi, i.e. Lower Burma, Sumatra and possibly some adjoining lands.

Aśoka's Dharma

In one of his inscriptions, Aśoka made an open confession of his faith in the Buddha, the *Dharma* (the Buddhist doctrine) and the *Saṅgha* (the Buddhist order of monks). He called the Buddha *Bhagavat*—an epithet applied by a Hindu to the object of his loving devotion. He went on pilgrimage to the places of the Blessed One's nativity and enlightenment and worshipped at the former place. He declared that whatever had been spoken by the Buddha, all that was quite well spoken. He took much interest in the exposition of the Buddhist *Dharma* or doctrine so that it might long endure. As to the *Saṅgha*, he kept in close touch with it after his memorable visit to the fraternity a year or so after his conversion. He impressed on the clergy the need of a correct exposition of the true doctrine and appointed special officers to busy themselves with the affairs of the Brotherhood. He also took steps to maintain the integrity of the church and prevent schism within its fold. Attempts in this direction are also recorded by tradition which avers further that a council was convened during his reign to compile the scriptures. That Aśoka interested himself in Buddhist scriptures as well as monastic discipline is amply attested by contemporary records.

But with all his faith in Buddhism, Aśoka was not intolerant of other creeds. He sought, it is true, to put an end to practices and institutions that he considered to be opposed to the fundamental principles of morality which, according to him, constituted the "essence of all religions". But he never became an enemy of the *Devas* and the Brāhmaṇas, or of any other religious fraternity. He continued to style himself the "Beloved of the *Devas*". He condemned unseemly behaviour towards Brāhmaṇas and showered gifts on them as well as on the Ājīvikas, the followers of Gosāla.

His *Dharma-Mahāmātras* were told to look after all sects including even the *Nirgranthas* or the Jainas. The emperor laid special emphasis on concourse (*samavāya*) and the guarding of speech (*vachoguti*), and warned people against the evil consequences of using harsh language in respect of other sects.

Though himself convinced of the truth of Buddha's teaching, of the efficacy of worship at the Buddhist holy places, of the necessity of making a confession of faith in the Buddhist trinity, of keeping in close touch with the Buddhist *Saṅgha* and maintaining its solidarity, Aśoka never sought to impose his sectarian belief on others. The prospect that he held before the people at large is not that of *sambodhi* or *nirvāṇa* but of *svarga* (heaven) and of mingling with the *Devas*. *Svarga* could be attained by all people, high or low, if only they showed zeal, not in adherence to a sectarian dogma or the performance of popular ritual (*maṅgala*) but in following the ancient rule (*porāṇā pakiti*), namely:

> "Obedience must be rendered to mother and father, likewise to elders; firmness (of compassion) must be shown towards animals; truth must be spoken: these same moral virtues must be practised.
>
> "In the same way the pupil must show reverence to the master, and one must behave in a suitable manner towards relatives."

In the pillar edicts it is declared that "happiness in this world and in the other world is difficult to secure without great love of morality, careful examination, great obedience, and great fear of sin and great energy". Prominence is also given, in the pillar edicts, to "spiritual insight". Towards the end of his career, Aśoka seems to have been convinced that reflection and meditation were of greater efficacy than moral regulations. But the need of such regulations was keenly felt by him in the first part of his reign.

It was a characteristic of Aśoka that he practised what he preached. He inculcated the virtues of compassion, liberality and toleration. He showed his compassion by abolishing or restricting the slaughter and mutilation of animals, and making arrangements for the healing both of men and beasts. He put a stop to the massacre of living creatures to make curries in the imperial kitchen, and discontinued the royal hunt. He abolished the sacrificial slaughter of animals and regulated festive gatherings (*samāja*) so as to prevent loss of life or the practice of immorality. He provided

medical herbs both for men and lower animals. His officers constructed reservoirs of water and planted trees and groves for the comfort of travellers. Special officials were sent from headquarters to check oppression in the outlying provinces. Liberality and toleration were shown by undertaking pious tours for the distribution of gifts of gold to Brāhmaṇas as well as *śramaṇas*, by making gifts of cave-dwellings even to non-Buddhist sects, and by the creation of special officers for the distribution of alms to all sects. Queens and princes were encouraged to participate in these works of charity, and at least one of the queens, Kāruvāki, readily co-operated with her consort.

The reference to cave-dwellings affords us a glimpse into another side of the emperor's activity. As late as the fifth century A.D., sojourners in Pāṭaliputra were struck with wonder at the magnificence of Aśoka's architectural achievements. Tradition credits him with the construction of a splendid palace besides numerous relic mounds, monasteries and temples. He is actually known to have enlarged the *stūpa* of Konākamana, a "former Buddha" and predecessor of Śākya-muni. He also set up pillars of morality (*dharma-stambha*). Modern critics are eloquent in their praise of the polished surface of his columns and the fine workmanship of their crowning sculptures.

Aśoka's Character

Aśoka is one of the most remarkable personalities in the history of India. He was tireless in his exertions, and unflagging in his zeal—all directed to the promotion of the spiritual and moral welfare of his people whom he called his children. Of his energy, ability and power of organisation, there is no doubt. He was the statesman who conducted successfully a great military campaign that led to the destruction of a powerful adversary whose sway extended over a vast and populous realm. He organised, a few years later, missions for the spiritual conquest of three continents, and turned a local sect in the Ganges valley into a world religion. He preached and practised the virtues of concord, toleration and non-violence. He eschewed military conquest, not after defeat but after victory, and pursued a policy of gentleness and clemency while still possessed of the vast resources of a mighty empire. The generosity and forbearance of this strong man were only matched by his sincerity and veracity, and he describes in words at once truthful and straightforward the terrible misery that he had inflicted on the people of a hapless kingdom. The

example of the pious Maurya king exercised an ennobling influence on succeeding generations. But the ruler who turned officers of state into religious propagandists, abolished the royal hunt and jousts of arms, entrusted the fierce tribesmen of the north-western and southern provinces to the tender care of preachers of morality, and did not rest till the sound of the war-drum was completely hushed and the only sound that was heard was that of religious discourses, certainly pursued a policy at which the great empire-builders who came before him would have looked askance. And it is not surprising that within a few years of his death the power that had hurled back the battalions of Seleukos proved unequal to the task of protecting the country from the princelings of Bactria.

The Later Imperial Mauryas

If Purāṇic tradition is to be believed, the immediate successor of Aśoka was his son Kunāla. The Chronicles of Kāshmīr, however, do not name this prince and mention Jalauka as the son and successor of Aśoka in that valley. It is not improbable that the Maurya empire broke up after the death of Aśoka, and was divided among his sons, one of whom inherited the home provinces and another made himself independent in the north-west. Tīvara, the only son named in the inscriptions, does not appear to have got a share of the patrimony. Kunāla was succeeded by his sons, one of whom, Bandhupālita, is known only in the Purāṇas, and another, Sampadi or Samprati, is mentioned by all our traditional authorities—Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist as well as Jaina, and is represented by the latter as a ruler of Pāṭaliputra and Ujjain and a great patron of their faith. The Purāṇas, however, with the exception perhaps of the *Bhāgavata*, do not actually represent Samprati as a son of Kunāla, and interpose between him and Kunāla a number of princes amongst whom Daśaratha was certainly a historical figure. He ruled in Magadha shortly after Aśoka and has left three epigraphs in the Nāgārjuni Hills, Bihār, recording the gifts of caves to the "venerable Ājīvikas".

After Daśaratha and Samprati came Śāliśūka, a prince mentioned in the astronomical work, the *Gārgī Saṁhitā*, as a wicked quarrelsome king. "Unrighteous, although theorising on righteousness, he cruelly oppressed his country." The successors of Śāliśūka, according to the Purāṇas, were Devavarman, Satamdhanus and Bṛihadratha. The last prince was overthrown by his commander-in-chief, Pushyamitra, who laid the foundations of a new dynasty styled Śuṅga in the Purāṇas.

There can be no doubt that during the rule of the later Mauryas the empire suffered a gradual decay. The secession of Kāshmīr and possibly of Berar is hinted at by Kalhaṇa, the historian of Kāshmīr, and Kālidāsa, the author of the Sanskrit play, the *Mālavikāgnimitram*, respectively. Towards the close of the third century B.C. the Kābul valley was under a king named Subhāgasena whose title, "king of the Indians", suggests that his territory included the Indus valley as well. As his name does not occur in any list of the later Mauryas, he may have belonged to a different family which rose to power in the north-west on the ruins of the Maurya empire. Even if he was connected with the Maurya line, he could not have belonged to the main branch of the family ruling at Pāṭaliputra. The title given to him by the Greek historians indicates that he was an independent potentate and not a mere viceroy of Taxila. The disintegration of the empire invited invasions from without, and we are told by Polybius that Antiochos III, the Great (223–187 B.C.), grandson of Antiochos II Theos, the contemporary of Aśoka, and great-great-grandson of Seleukos I Nikator, the contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya, descended into India and received a number of elephants from Subhāgasena. If the *Gārgī Saṁhitā* is to be believed, a Greek army penetrated even to Pāṭaliputra.

The decline of Maurya authority is attributed by some scholars to a reaction promoted by the Brāhmaṇas whose privileged position is said to have been affected by the policy of Aśoka. But there is nothing in the records of Aśoka himself to suggest that he was an enemy of the Brāhmaṇas. On the contrary, he showed extreme solicitude for their welfare and extended his patronage to members of this community as well as to Buddhists, Jainas and Ājīvikas. One Brāhmaṇa historian, Kalhaṇa, praises him for his piety and benefactions and testifies to the friendly relations subsisting between one of his sons and the Brāhmaṇical Hindus. Another Brāhmaṇa writer, Bāṇa, applies the epithet *anārya*, ignoble, to the general who overthrew Bṛihadratha, the last of the Imperial Mauryas. Certain Purāṇic writers, it is true, refer to the Mauryas as *asuras* or demons, and the *Gārgī Saṁhitā* draws pointed attention to the oppressive rule of Śāliśūka, but there is nothing to suggest that the Brāhmaṇas were the special victims of Maurya oppression, and a Brāhmaṇa appears as the commander-in-chief under the last Maurya. The epithet *asura*, demon, or *suradvish*, enemy of the gods, was applied not only to the Mauryas but to all persons "beguiled by the Buddha". But the evidence of the Purāṇas in this respect is contradicted by that of contemporary

inscriptions which refer to Aśoka and the only one among his successors who has left any epigraphic record as "*devānaṁpiya*", that is, "beloved (and not enemy) of the gods".

The true cause of the Maurya debacle lies deeper. Aśoka eschewed military conquest after the Kaliṅga war when he had been anointed eight years, and called upon his descendants not to entertain any thought of aggressive warfare. Shortly afterwards, even the royal hunt was abolished. The army seems to have been mostly inactive during the remaining part of the reign—a period of twenty-nine years—as the emperor himself exultingly declares that "in consequence of the practice of morality on his part, the sound of *bheri*, or the war-drum, had become the sound of morality". The ease with which the general Pushyamitra, according to the testimony of Bāṇa, overthrew his king in the very sight of the troops shows that, unlike the earlier kings of the dynasty who often took the field in person, the last of the Mauryas lost touch with his armed forces and ceased to command their affection. Great difficulty was also experienced in controlling the officials in the outlying provinces even in the days of Bindusāra and Aśoka. If tradition is to be believed, ministerial oppression had twice goaded the people of Taxila to open rebellion. The quinquennial and triennial *anusaṁyāna* or tour of *mahāmātras* (high officers) was specially instituted by Aśoka to check this evil. But when his strong arm was withdrawn, central control apparently became slack. Some of the outlying provinces seceded from the empire, and the process of disintegration was accelerated by members of the imperial family, some of whom set up independent sovereignties while others cruelly oppressed the country. The distracted condition of the country emboldened the Greeks to renew their incursions. The final *coup de grâce* was given by the general Pushyamitra.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DISRUPTION OF THE MAGADHAN EMPIRE AND INCURSIONS FROM CENTRAL ASIA AND IRĀN

Successors of the Imperial Mauryas

WITH the fall of the Mauryas, Indian history for the time being loses its unity. The command of one single political authority is no longer obeyed from the snowy heights of the northern mountains to the verdant plains of Bengal and the North Carnatic. Hordes of foreign barbarians pour through the north-western gates of the country and establish powerful kingdoms in Gandhāra (North-West Frontier), Śākala (North-Central Punjab) and other places. The southern provinces throw off the yoke of Magadha and rival in power and splendour the remnant of the great empire of the Gangetic plain. A new dynasty supplants the Mauryas in the *Madhya-deśa*, or the Upper Ganges valley, and finds it no easy task to maintain its position against the rush of invasion from the south and the north-west.

In Magadha and the neighbouring provinces the immediate successors of the Mauryas, according to the Purāṇas, were the so-called Śuṅgas whose sovereignty is commemorated by a Bharhut inscription. The Śuṅgas are usually regarded as a Brāhmaṇa family belonging to the *Bhāradvāja* clan. The founder, Pushyamitra, is known from literature and also from a much discussed epigraph, discovered at Ayodhyā. In one famous work, the family to which he belonged is styled *Baimbika* and not Śuṅga. He was the general of the last of the Imperial Mauryas, whom he overthrew in the very sight of the army. The people seem to have acquiesced in the change of dynasty as the later Mauryas had proved tyrannical and incapable of stemming the tide of Greek invasion and maintaining the prestige of the arms of Magadha.

The dominions of the new king at first extended as far south as the Narmadā (Narbadā or Nerbudda). The north-western boundary seems to have been ill-defined, but tradition credits the house of Pushyamitra with having exercised control as far as Jālandhar and Śiālkoṭ in the Punjab. Pāṭaliputra continued to

be graced with the presence of the sovereign, but it had a rival in the city of Vidiśā, modern Besnagar in Eastern Mālwa, where the crown prince Agnimitra held his court.

The prince was soon involved in a war with the neighbouring kingdom of Vidarbha or Berar. He succeeded in defeating his adversary and reducing him to obedience. A more serious danger threatened from the north-west. The Greeks had renewed their incursions towards the close of the third century B.C. and a Greek king, Antiochos the Great of Syria, had penetrated into the Kābul valley and induced the Indian king Subhāgasena to surrender a number of elephants. His example was soon followed by his son-in-law Demetrios, prince of Bactria, who effected extensive conquests in the Punjab and the lower Indus valley. Equally brilliant achievements are attributed to a later king, Menander. The war-like activities of the Greeks are alluded to by Patañjali, Kālidāsa and the author of the *Gārgī Saṁhitā*. We are told that the "viciously valiant barbarians" besieged Sāketa in Oudh and Madhyamikā near Chitor and threatened Pāṭaliputra itself. The tide of invasion was arrested and prince Vasumitra, son of Agnimitra, inflicted a defeat on the *Yavanas* on the banks of the Sindhu, either the Indus or some stream in Central India. The grandfather of the victorious prince signalised the triumph of his arms by the successful performance of two horse-sacrifices. These rites had a double significance. On the one hand they proclaimed the rise of a new empire on the ashes of Mauryan hegemony, which was successful in defending *Āryāvarta* against the barbarian outcastes of the frontiers. On the other hand they heralded the dawn of a new Brāhmaṇical movement which reached its climax in the spacious days of the Guptas.

Pushyamitra died after a reign of thirty-six years, according to the Purāṇas (*c.* 187–151 B.C. according to the system of chronology adopted in these pages). He was succeeded by his son Agnimitra. This prince is the hero of a famous drama by India's greatest playwright, Kālidāsa. After him the history of the dynasty became obscure. Vidiśā, modern Besnagar in Eastern Mālwa, continued to be a great political centre, and its princes had diplomatic relations with the Greek potentates of the borderland. But the power of the family gradually weakened, and in the end the ruler of the line became a puppet in the hands of his Brāhmaṇa minister, like the Childerics and Chilperics of Western Europe in the hands of their Carolingian Mayors of the Palace. Eventually the ministerial family, known as Kāṇva, assumed the purple under Vasudeva (*c.* 75 B.C.), but permitted the *fainéant* kings of the

Śuṅga dynasty to continue to rule in obscurity in a corner of their former dominions. In or about 40–30 B.C. both the Śuṅgas and the Kāṇvas were swept away by a southern power, and the province of Eastern Mālwa where stood the metropolis of Vidiśā was eventually absorbed within the dominions of the conqueror. Princes with names ending in Mitra, and possibly connected with the Śuṅgas and Kāṇvas, seemed to have exercised sway in Magadha and the Ganges-Jumnā valley till the Scythian conquest.

The Sātavāhanas

The southern potentate who put an end to the rule of the Śuṅgas and the Kāṇvas is described in the Purāṇas as an Andhra, a name applied to the people of the Telugu-speaking tract at the mouth of the Godāvarī and the Krishṇā. In contemporary epigraphic records, however, kings of this line are invariably referred to as Sātavāhana and a "district of the Sātavāhanas" has been proved to lie in the neighbourhood of Bellary in the Kanarese area of the Madras Presidency. The memory of the dynasty lingers in the story of the king Śālivāhana famous in Indian folk-lore. This legendary hero seems to have appropriated to himself the glorious deeds of several distinguished members of a long line of emperors of the Deccan.

The founder of the family was Simuka, but the man who raised it to eminence was his son or nephew Śātakarṇi I. The latter allied himself with the powerful Mahāraṭhi chieftains of the western Deccan, and signalised his accession to power by the performance of the horse-sacrifice. Some time after his death, the Sātavāhana power seems to have been submerged beneath a wave of Scythian invasion. But the fortunes of the dynasty were restored by Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi, who took pride in calling himself the destroyer of the Śakas (Scythians), Yavanas (Greeks) and Pahlavas (Parthians). Gautamīputra built up an empire that extended from Mālwa in the north to the Kanarese country in the south. His son, Vāsishṭhīputra Pulumāyi, ruled at Pratishṭhāna or Paithan on the banks of the Godāvarī, now situated in the Aurangabad district of the Nizam's dominions. Two other cities, Vaijayantī (in North Kanara) and Amarāvatī (in the Guntur district), attained eminence in the Sātavāhana period. A king named Vāsishṭhīputra Śātakarṇi, who may have been a brother of Pulumāyi, married the daughter of the contemporary Śaka satrap (viceroy) Rudradāman I, but this did not prevent the latter from inflicting crushing defeats on his southern relation. The power of the Sātavāhanas revived under

Śri Yajña Śātakarṇi, but he was the last great prince of the line, and after him the empire began to fall to pieces like the Bahmanī kingdom of a later age.

The most important among the succeeding powers in the Deccan were the Ābhīras and the Vākāṭakas of Nāsik and Berar in Upper Mahārāshtra, the Ikshvākus and the Śālaṅkāyanas of the Kṛishṇā and West Godāvarī districts, the Pallavas of Kāñchī (near Madras) and the Kadambas of Vaijayantī or Banavāsi in North Kanara.

Khāravela of Kaliṅga

The earlier Sātavāhana empire had a formidable rival in the kingdom of Kaliṅga, which had thrown off the yoke of Magadha some time after the death of Aśoka and risen to greatness under Khāravela, a prince of remarkable vigour and ambition. Khāravela defied or rescued Śātakarṇi, probably the first of that name, and humbled the pride of Magadha, then under a prince who has been identified with Bṛihaspatimitra. Bṛihaspati is, in the opinion of some scholars, the same as Pushyamitra, but the theory lacks plausibility. The Kaliṅga king is also credited with having pushed his southern conquests beyond the Godāvarī. His career was meteoric, and after his death his empire vanished as quickly as it had risen.

The Tamil Country

The far south of India beyond the Veṅkaṭa Hills, known as the Tamil or Draviḍa country, was parcelled out among many States of which three were important, namely, Choḷa, Pāṇḍya and Kerala. The Choḷas occupied the present Tanjore and Trichinopoly districts with some adjoining areas, and showed great military activity in the second century B.C. A Choḷa prince, Eḷara, conquered Ceylon, and many anecdotes have been preserved which testify to his strong sense of justice. The Pāṇḍyas excelled in trade and learning. They occupied the districts of Madurā and Tinnevelly with portions of South Travancore. A Pāṇḍya king sent an embassy to the Roman emperor, Augustus, in the first century B.C. To the north and west of the Pāṇḍyas lay the Kerala country embracing Mālabār, Cochin and North Travancore.

Renewed Incursions of the Greeks

The political disintegration of India after the Great Mauryas invited invasions from without, and we have already referred to

renewed warlike activities on the part of the Greeks of Syria and Bactria. The Syrian empire, once so powerful under Seleukos, was now seriously weakened by the secession of Parthia and Bactria which were torn from the Seleukidan dominions by satraps who revolted and asserted their independence. And it was from these rebellious provinces that fresh invaders swooped down upon the smiling plains of the Punjab.

At first Bactria showed the greatest activity. Demetrios, son of Euthydemos, king of Bactria, reduced to submission a considerable portion of Afghānistan, the Punjab and Sind, and founded or embellished cities in the conquered territories which bore his own name and possibly that of his father. But a rival appeared in Eukratides, who made himself master of the Indian borderland, leaving to his antagonist the precarious tenure of some provinces in the interior. A later king, Menander, who apparently belonged



COIN OF DEMETRIOS

to the house of Demetrios, reigned gloriously at Śākala (Euthymedia or Euthydemia), identified with modern Śiālkoṭ in the Punjab. His dominions may have included the Bajaur territory in the North-West where an inscription dated in the fifth year of his reign has been discovered recently. He is credited with having pushed his arms beyond the river Beas. Another king, Antialkidas, ruled at Taxila (near Rāwalpindi) in Gandhāra and sent an embassy to the court of Vidiśā. Some of these later Greek princes and members of their court succumbed to the influence of their environment and became adherents of Buddhism or of Vaishṇavism. Greek political power in parts of Afghānistān and the Indus valley was soon threatened by the Parthians led by Mithradates I, a contemporary of Eukratides who ruled in the second century B.C. In the first century A.D. all vestige of Greek rule seems to have disappeared from the Punjab as well as the borderland. The last known Greek king was Hermaios, who soon made way for the

founders of the Parthian and Kushān monarchies to the south of the Hindukush.

The Sakas and Parthians

The foreign conquerors who supplanted the Greeks in north-west India belong to three main groups, namely, Śaka, Pahlava or Parthian, and Yue-chi or Kushān. The Śakas were displaced from their home in Central Asia by the Yue-chi and were forced to migrate south. We are told by Chinese annalists that the Śaka king went south and ruled in Ki-pin, which about this time probably corresponded to the territory drained by some of the northern tributaries of the Kābul river. They are found settled in southern Afghānistān in the time of Isidore of Charax, probably about the beginning of the Christian era, and the territory they occupied came to be known as Śakasthāna, modern Sistān. Gradually they extended their sway to the Indus valley and Western India, which came to be styled Scythia by Greek mariners and geographers in the first and second centuries A.D. In the first century after Christ part of this territory had already fallen into the hands of the Parthians. Inscriptions and coins disclose the names of many Scytho-Parthian kings and provincial governors. One of the earliest among these rulers was Maues, Moa or Moga, who was acknowledged as their suzerain by the governors of Chuksha near Taxila. Maues seems to have been followed by Azes I, Azilises and Azes II, after whom the sovereignty of the Indian borderland passed into the hands of Gondophernes, a Parthian. Some scholars attribute to Azes I the foundation of that reckoning commencing 58 B.C. which afterwards came to be known as the Vikrama *Samvat*, but the matter cannot be regarded as certain. Indian tradition ascribes to it an indigenous origin. It was handed down by the Mālava tribe, and in the post-Gupta period came to be associated with the great Vikramāditya, the destroyer of the Śakas.

With one of the kings named Azes was associated a ruler named Spalirises who seems to have reigned in Southern Afghānistān and to have been a successor of King Vonones. The identity of this Vonones with any king of the imperial line of Arsakes must remain a baffling problem. The Śaka-Pahlava kings ruled over an empire that embraced several provinces. The governors of these administrative units were known as satraps (*Kshatrapa*) or great satraps (*Mahākshatrapa*). One of these satrapal families ruled in Kāpiśa near the junction of the Ghorband and Panjshir rivers in Afghānistān,

another near Taxila in the Western Punjab, a third at Mathurā in the Jumnā valley, a fourth in the upper Deccan and a fifth at Ujjain in Mālwa. The satraps of the upper Deccan and part of Western India belonged to the Kshaharāta race, probably a branch of the Śakas. They carved out a principality on the ruins of the early Sātavāhana empire and attained great power under Nahapāna. But they were finally overthrown by Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi who restored the fallen fortunes of the Sātavāhana family. The satraps of Ujjain traced their descent from the lord (*svāmin*) Chashṭana, the Tiastanes of Ptolemy the geographer. Rudradāman, grandson of Chashṭana, ruled from about A.D. 130 to 150, and was one of the greatest Śaka rulers of ancient India. He entered into a matrimonial alliance with the Sātavāhana dynasty, but this did not prevent him from inflicting defeats on his southern neighbour. If his court poet is to be believed his sway extended from the Konkan in the south to Sind and Mārwār in the north. The successors of Rudradāman were not so strong as he was. Internal feuds were common. Power gradually fell into the hands of the Ābhīra chieftains. The death-knell of satrapal rule in Mālwa and Kāṭhiāwār was sounded when a new indigenous empire rose in the Ganges valley in the fourth century A.D. and the arms of Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II swept through the tableland of Mālwa and involved Śaka and Ābhīra in common ruin.

Fall of the Parthians and the Kushān Conquest

Long before the final catastrophe that ultimately overtook the satrapal line of Chashṭana, the Śaka-Pahlava emperors of the north-west had passed through vicissitudes of another kind. Gondophernes, who had probably succeeded Azes II on the imperial throne of the north-west, had a chequered career. Numismatic evidence points to the wide extent of his sway and his leaning towards Indian culture. Tradition associates his name with that of the Christian apostle St. Thomas. He does not seem to have left to his successors a stable government. We are told by a contemporary Greek mariner that Parthian princes in the latter half of the first century A.D. were constantly driving each other out. The Yue-chi nomads of Central Asia, who had been driven from their ancestral abode on the Chinese frontier about 165 B.C. and had settled in the Oxus valley, were not slow to take advantage of Parthian disunion. The five principalities into which the Yue-chi were divided in their new home were consolidated into a powerful monarchy by Kieu-tsieu-k'io, identified with Kujula Kasa, Kadphises or

Kadphises I, head of the Kushān (*Kuṣana*) section of the horde. Kadphises attacked the Parthians, took possession of Ki-pin and Kābul and became complete master of the Indian borderland. Copper coins of Kujula bearing a remarkable resemblance to Roman *denarii*, particularly to the Constantia type of the emperor Claudius (A.D. 41–54), prove that he ruled not earlier than the middle of the first century A.D. A *terminus ad quem* is probably fixed by the Chinese reference to the Yue-chi occupation of Kābul or some territory in its neighbourhood before A.D. 92.

The successor of Kieu-tsieu-k'io or Kujula Kadphises was Yen-kao-chen or Vima Kadphises (II) of the coins. The new king is credited by Chinese annalists with the conquest of the Indian interior, where he set up a governor to rule in his name. He became a convert to Śaivism and proclaimed himself as *Mahiśvara* on his coins. The



KANISHKA

From a coin in the British Museum

wealth and prosperity of his dominions are illustrated by the fine gold coins that were issued under his orders. Ambassadors from India presented their credentials to the Roman emperor Trajan (A.D. 98–117). They may have arrived from the Kushān court, but it is uncertain whether they were sent by Kadphises II or a later king, Kanishka.

Kanishka I

Kanishka is usually regarded as a successor of Vima Kadphises (Kadphises II). To him is attributed by many scholars the foundation of the Śaka era of A.D. 78. This era is the only Indian reckoning traditionally ascribed to a Śaka potentate, and Kanishka is the only Scythian king known to have established an era, that is to say, his regnal reckoning was continued by his successors for several generations, and was thus transformed into an era. Kanishka wa no doubt a Kushān and not strictly speaking a Śaka, but

the latter designation was used in India in a wide sense to include all kindred tribes. Chinese historians refer to a famous conflict between a Kushān king and the great general Pan-chao in the last quarter of the first century A.D. The view held by certain scholars is that the Kushān antagonist of Pan-chao was Kadphises II. No such event is, however, associated with Yen-kao-chen or Kadphises II by Chinese annalists. On the other hand Kanishka, whose name was not known to the official historians of China, certainly came into conflict with that country, and Hiuen Tsang speaks of one or more Chinese hostages detained at his court. If Kanishka was the contemporary of Pan-chao the ascription to him of the Śaka era cannot be regarded as untenable. The rival theory which makes Kadphises II the founder of the era and places Kanishka in the second quarter of the second century A.D. fails to explain why in the time of Kadphises II his own reckoning is not used in the metropolitan territory, and why no era commencing from the second century A.D. is alluded to by later writers including al-Biruni. The fame of Kanishka and his line was still green in the days of the Khivan scholar, who gives a list of Indian eras; and it is difficult to believe that a reckoning commencing from the second century A.D., if really founded by Kanishka and perpetuated by his descendants, escaped his notice.

According to Hiuen Tsang the great empire over which Kanishka exercised his sway had its capital at Purushapura or Peshāwār. Epigraphic evidence points to the inclusion within his dominions of the wide expanse of territory from Gandhāra and Sue Vihar to Oudh and Benares. The inclusion of Kāshmīr is testified to by Kalhaṇa, and clashes with the rulers of Sāketa and Pāṭaliputra are vouched for by other writers. As already stated, the pilgrim Hiuen Tsang refers to a war with China in the course of which the Kushān king obtained some initial successes in eastern Turkestān. But he was unable to make much impression on his mighty northern neighbour. The north alone, according to tradition, remained unsubdued.

But it is not as a conqueror that Kanishka is chiefly remembered by posterity. His chief title to fame rests on his monuments and on the patronage he extended to the religion of Śākya-muni. The celebrated *chaitya* that he constructed at Peshāwār excited the wonder and admiration of travellers down to a late period, and the famous sculptures executed under his orders include a life-size statue of the king himself. In Buddhist ecclesiastical history his name is honoured as that of the prince who summoned a great council to examine the Buddhist scriptures and prepare commentaries

on them. Inscriptions and coins bear eloquent testimony to the king's zeal for the religion of the Buddha. That his association with it dated from the beginning of his reign is possibly proved by the Peshāwār Casket Inscriptions. Among the celebrities who graced his court the most eminent was perhaps Aśvaghosha, philosopher, poet, and dramatist, who wrote the *Buddha Charita* and other books.

Successors of Kanishka I

Kanishka's rule lasted for twenty-three years. His immediate successor was Vāsishka, who had a short reign and was succeeded by Huvishka. The empire of Huvishka was not less extensive than that of the traditional patron of Aśvaghosha. It may have spread farther to the west, as a record of his reign has been unearthed at Wardak to the west of Kābul. Mathurā was now a great centre of Kushān power and it was adorned with monuments by Huvishka as the city of Peshāwār had been embellished by the greatest of his predecessors. For some time Huvishka had apparently a colleague or rival in Kanishka of the Ārā inscription, who is described as a son of Vājheshka, possibly the same as Vāsishka, and receives in addition to the titles of great king, the king of kings, son of heaven (*devaputra*) assumed by his predecessors, the novel title of Kaisara, "Caesar". In Kalhaṇa's Chronicle we have a reference to the rule of "Hushka, Jushka and Kanishka", apparently identical with Huvishka, Vājheshka and his son. They were the reputed founders of three cities in Kāshmīr named after them. Kanishka of this passage may have reference to the predecessor of Vāsishka, but it is more probable that the king referred to by Kalhaṇa is identical with his namesake mentioned in the Ārā inscription.

The last great Kushān king was Vāsudeva I, who ruled from about the year 67 to 98 of the Kanishka era. Most of his inscriptions have been found at or near Mathurā, and his coins usually bear the god Śiva and rarely any Iranian deity. It is not improbable that he gradually lost touch with the north-western provinces. The decline of the Kushān power in the north-west was hastened by the rise of the Sassanian dynasty of Persia. In the third century A.D. we find references to four separate kingdoms all dependent on the Yue-chi. This possibly suggests territorial disintegration though the nominal suzerainty of the "Son of Heaven" may have continued to be acknowledged by all these states. The rule of the Kushāns in part of the Jumnā valley seems to have been supplanted by that of the Nāgas. The latter are represented as ruling over

Mathurā, Padmāvatī (Padam Pawaya) and a few other places in Mid-India contemporaneously with the Guptas of Prayāga (Allahābād), Sāketa (Oudh) and Magadha (South Bihār). About the middle of the fourth century A.D. the Nāgas were reduced to subjection by the Gupta emperors. The "Son of Heaven" continued to rule in diminished glory over an obscure corner of the Indian borderland where he soon felt the irresistible might of Gupta arms.

CHAPTER IX

CIVILISATION IN THE ERA OF MAURYAN IMPERIALISM AND OF GRAECO-SCYTHIAN INVASIONS (*c.* 324 B.C.—A.D. 320)

Forms of Government

In the period under review we have for the first time in the history of this country great empires extending from the Hindukush to the valleys of the Godāvarī and the Krishṇā. It will, however, be a mistake to think that the imperial or even the ordinary monarchical system was the only form of government known to the people of the age. Greek observers referring to the activities of the overseers who "enquire into and superintend all that goes on in India" add that "they make report to the king or, where the state is without a king, to the magistrates". Thus non-monarchical states governed by their own magistrates flourished side by side with territories ruled by kings. Arrian makes distinct mention of self-governed cities. Towards the end of our period the existence of autonomous tribal governments is proved by numismatic evidence. Such states are usually referred to as *gaṇas*, although the designation *saṅgha* is also known.

But monarchy was in this, as in all ages, in this country, the prevailing form of government. A remarkable feature of the period is the association in many parts of India of a prince of the blood or an allied chieftain with the titular or real head of the government as co-ordinate ruler or subordinate colleague. Such a prince was often called *yuvarāja* or *yuva-mahārāja* (crown prince or junior king). Sometimes he was honoured with full regal titles. In the literature on polity this type of rule was known as *dvairājya* or diarchy.

Ideas of Kingship

Ideas of kingship underwent a change during the period. At the commencement of the age a king was considered to be a mere mortal, though a favoured mortal, the beloved of the deities. Thus Aśoka referred to himself and his forebears as *devānaṁpiya*, the beloved of the gods. The Greeks, however, introduced titles like the "divine king", the "god-like queen", etc. In the early centuries

of the Christian era a Parthian king took the title of Devavrata, an epithet applied to an epic hero, the son of a river goddess, and also to Kārttikeya, the god of war. The Kushān emperors adopted the still more significant title of *devaputra*, "Son of Heaven". The deification of rulers was clearly on the way to accomplishment, and ideas of divine kingship found favour especially in tracts which came under foreign influence. Greek and Chinese influence is clearly discernible in the title of *devaputra*.

Kings, even those who preceded the Scythian "Sons of Heaven", were no puppets. They had usually at their disposal powerful standing armies and the material resources of vast kingdoms and empires over which they presided. From the observations of Greek writers and the actual records of the reigns of Chandragupta, Aśoka, Khāravela, Gautamīputra and many other rulers, it is clear that kings often led the troops in person to the battlefield. They also administered justice, issued rescripts, made important appointments, granted remission of taxes and took a large share in the ordinary work of civil government. They generally held in their hands the main strings of policy. Rulers with such powers and resources cannot be regarded as limited monarchs of the type with which the modern world is familiar. Nevertheless it is a mistake to consider Hindu kings of the age as absolute despots. There was a body of ancient rules which even the most masterful of the rulers of the period viewed with respect. The people were an important element (*prakṛiti*) of the state. They were looked upon as children (*prajā*) for whose welfare the head of the state was responsible, and to whom he owed a debt which could only be discharged by good government. There was a certain amount of decentralisation notably in the spheres of local government, legislation and administration of justice in the rural areas. The existence of autonomous communities, urban and rural, political and economic, social and religious, put a limit, in normal times, on the exercise of authority by the supreme executive. Lastly, there was usually at imperial head-quarters, and also at the chief centres of provincial government, a body of ministers (*mantri parishad*, *mati sachiva*) who had a right to be consulted especially at times of emergency.

Literature on Polity

For a detailed record of the administrative arrangements of the period we have to look mainly to three classes of evidence, namely, inscriptions, accounts of Greek and Roman observers, notably Megasthenes, and literature on polity styled *Rājaśāstra* or *Arthaśāstra*.

Treatises on polity are often found embedded in legal or Purāṇic collections. But a few exist as independent works. The most famous among these is the *Arthaśāstra* attributed to Kauṭilya, the traditional minister of Chandragupta Maurya. The *Arthaśāstra* certainly existed before Bāṇa (seventh century A.D.) and the *Nandi Sūtra* of the Jainas (not later than the fifth century A.D.). But it is doubtful if in its present shape it is as old as the time of the first Maurya. Reference to *Chinapaṭṭa*, China silk, a commodity often mentioned in classical Sanskrit literature, points to a later date, as China was clearly outside the horizon of the early Mauryas, and is unknown to Indian epigraphy before the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions. Equally noteworthy is the use of Sanskrit as the official language, a feature not characteristic of the Maurya period. A date as late as the Gupta period is, however, precluded by the absence of any reference to the *denarius* in the sections dealing with weights and coins. Quite in keeping with this view is the reference to the *Arthaśāstra* contained in the Jaina canonical works that were reduced to writing in the Gupta age.

Maurya Administration

The administrative history of the epoch is best studied under two heads, namely, Maurya administration and the system prevailing in the days of their Indian and Graeco-Scythian successors.

As already stated, the Maurya king did not lay claim to divine rank. Aśoka looked upon his people as his children and assigned their care to his officers just as a mother does to skilful nurses. The idea of government paternalism persists in these expressions. In one record he declared that whatever effort he was making was intended to discharge the debt which he owed to living beings. The *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, which in its present shape may be post-Mauryan but which uses older material, declares that "whatever pleases himself the king shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good." The king is also advised to show fatherly kindness to his people.

The powers of the king were extensive. We have it on the authority of Megasthenes that the king took part in war and the administration of justice. While listening to causes he did not suffer himself to be interrupted even though the time arrived for the massage of his limbs. Appointments to the most important offices were made by the ruler himself and the same authority often laid down the broad lines of policy and issued rescripts and codes of regulations (*śāsana*, *dharmaniyama*) for the guidance of his officers

and the people. Control was maintained over the most distant officials by an army of secret reporters and itinerant judges, and communication with them was kept up by a network of roads marked with pillars at every ten *stadia*.

It was impossible for a single individual to support the Atlantean load of administration. The king had the assistance of a council of advisers styled the *Parishad* or the *mantri parishad*, who were specially consulted in times of emergency. There were also bodies (*nikāya*) of trained officials who looked after the ordinary affairs of the realm. Greek writers refer to three important classes of officers, styled district officials (Agronomoi), city commissioners (Astynomoi) and a third body who had the care of military affairs. In the inscriptions of Aśoka we have references to *Rajukas* and *Prādeśikas*, charged with the welfare of *Jānapadas* or country parts and *Pradeśas* or districts, *Mahāmātras* or high officers charged with the administrations of cities (*Nagala Viyohālaka*) and sundry other matters, and a host of minor officials including clerks (*Yuta*), scribes (*Lipikara*) and reporters (*Paṭivedaka*). The *Arthaśāstra* mentions the official designations *Mahāmātra*, *Yukta*, etc. It refers to the highest officers as the eighteen *tīrthas*, the chief amongst whom were the *Mantrin* (chief minister), *Purohita* (high priest), *Yuvarāja* (heir-apparent) and *Senāpati* (commander-in-chief). Another important class of officials mentioned in the literature on polity are the *Adhyakshas* or superintendents in charge of the various departments of the state. Officials were appointed irrespective of caste, creed or nationality. *Vaiśyas* and even *Yavanas* were admitted to the highest offices of the state.

At the head of the judiciary stood the king himself. But there were special tribunals of justice, both in cities and the country parts, presided over by *Mahāmātras* and *Rajukas*. Greek writers refer to judges who listened to the cases of foreigners. Petty cases in villages were doubtless decided by the headman and the village elders. Aśoka seems to have introduced many reforms in judicial administration and procedure. While preserving a certain amount of uniformity he is said to have allowed considerable discretion to the *Rajukas* so that they could discharge their duties unperturbed. Judges in the outlying provinces do not appear to have done their work to the satisfaction of the emperor. Greek writers testify to the severity of the penal code, and the emperor admits in some of his inscriptions that in Kaliṅga individuals suffered from arbitrary imprisonment and torture. To check maladministration in this and other outlying areas the emperor or his viceroys sent forth in rotation every five or three years such

officers as were of mild and temperate disposition and regardful of the sanctity of life.

The army was often led by the king himself. Chandragupta personally undertook the campaign against the generals of Alexander, and Aśoka was an eye-witness of the terrible carnage in Kaliṅga. It is only in the days of the last Maurya that we find a *senāpati* overshadowing the king and transferring to himself the allegiance of the troops. The army of Chandragupta, according to Pliny, included 600,000 foot soldiers, 30,000 cavalry, and 9,000 elephants, besides chariots. The protection of the king's person was entrusted to an amazonian bodyguard of armed women. The fighting forces were under the supervision of a governing body of thirty divided into six boards of five members each. Each of these boards was responsible for one of the following departments, namely, the navy, transport and commissariat, the infantry, the cavalry, the chariots and the elephants. In military as well as judicial affairs Aśoka must have introduced great innovations. He deprecated wars and abolished even hunting. In one of his inscriptions he declares exultingly that throughout his dominions the sound of the war-drum had become the sound of *dharṁa* (religious discourse). It would have been a miracle if the army could have preserved its morale and efficiency under such circumstances.

The cost of civil and military administration even at the centre must have been enormous. The chief sources of revenue from villages mentioned in an inscription of Aśoka are the *bhāga* and the *bali*. The *bhāga* was the king's share of the produce of the soil, which was normally fixed at one-sixth, though in special cases it was raised to one-fourth or reduced to one-eighth. *Bali* is explained by commentators as an extra impost levied on special tracts for the subsistence of certain officials. According to Greek writers, husbandmen paid, in addition to a fourth part of the produce of the soil, a land tribute because "all India is the property of the Crown and no private person is permitted to own land". Originally *bali* may have had reference to this land tribute. Taxes on land were collected by the *Agronomoi* who measured the land and superintended the irrigation works. Other state-dues included cattle from herdsmen and tribute and prescribed services from those engaged in the trades. In urban areas the main sources of revenue were birth and death taxes, fines and tithes on sales. The distinction between taxes levied in rural and fortified areas (*rāshtra* and *durga*) is indicated in the *Arthaśāstra*, which refers to certain high revenue functionaries styled the *samāhartṛi* and the *sannidhātṛi*.

No such officials are, however, mentioned in the known Maurya inscriptions. Greek writers on the other hand, in describing the seventh caste of Indian society which consisted of the king's councillors and assessors refer distinctly to treasurers of the state or superintendents of the treasury.

A considerable part of the revenue was spent on the army. The artisans, too, according to Diodoros, received maintenance from the imperial exchequer. They made armour for the troops, and constructed implements for husbandmen and others. The services of some of them must have been requisitioned for the construction of the wooden ramparts and towers encircling the city of Pāṭaliputra, and the splendid palaces which excelled in magnificence the stately regal edifices of Susa and Ecbatana. To them we owe also the splendid monoliths and other monuments of the time of Aśoka.

Herdsmen and hunters received an allowance of grain from the state in return for clearing the land of wild beasts and fowls. Another class which benefited from the royal bounty were the philosophers, among whom were included *Brāhmaṇas* as well as *Śramaṇas* (ascetics). Vast sums were also spent for irrigation and other works of public utility. The most famous of the irrigation works of the early Maurya period is the Sudarśana lake of Kāṭhiāwār, constructed by Pushyagupta the Vaiśya, an officer of the founder of the dynasty, and provided with supplemental channels by the *Yavanarāja* Tushāspha in the days of the emperor Aśoka. Roads furnished with milestones had already been constructed by the officials of the first Maurya. These were provided with shady groves and wells by his famous grandson. The latter also built hospitals both for men and other living creatures.

For the efficient administration of their huge empire the Mauryas divided their dominions into provinces subdivided into districts called *āhāra*, *vishaya* and perhaps also *pradeśa*. Each of the provinces was placed under a viceroy or governor who was either a prince of the blood or an official of the crown. In one case, and perhaps in several others, the local ruler or administrator bore the title of *rājā*, which is normally indicative of feudatory rank. The system of hereditary officials does not seem to have come into use in the early period, at least in the province of Surāshṭra or Kāṭhiāwār. The assumption of the title of rājā by local rulers, and the grant of autonomy to the *Rajukas* in the days of Aśoka, ultimately let loose centrifugal forces which must have helped in the dismemberment of the empire. In the early Maurya period, however, efficient control over the provincial governors was

maintained in various ways. With the princely viceroys were associated a number of high officers (*mahāmātras*) who received orders from the sovereign. The work of erring *mahāmātras* in certain areas was supervised by special officers sent periodically from the metropolis. There was, besides, a host of secret emissaries of the central government (ephors, episkopoi, *paṭivedakas*) who enquired into and superintended all that went on in India and made reports to the emperor. Aśoka gave special directions to the reporters that they were to report to him the affairs of the people at any time anywhere "while he was eating, in the harem, in the inner apartment, at the cow-pen, in the palanquin or in the park".

It may be thought that the all-embracing activities of the Maurya imperial government left little room for popular initiative or self-government. Nevertheless it is a fact that autonomous communities did exist in Maurya India, and classical writers make distinct mention of self-governed cities. Important affairs of the metropolis itself were conducted by a commission of thirty members divided, like the governing body of the defence forces, into six boards of five members each. There was a small committee to look after each of the following departments, namely, the mechanical arts, foreign residents, registration of births and deaths, sales, exchanges, weights and measures, supervision of manufactured articles, and collection of tithes on sales. Officers in charge of the city (*nagarādhyaksha*, *nigamapradhāna*) find mention in Indian literature. The *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra* says in the chapter dealing with the examination of government servants that each department shall be officered by several heads (*bahumukhya*), and that the *adhyaksha*, or chief executive officer of a department, shall carry on his work in company with four other officials. The *Nagaraka* or the Town Prefect, whose duties are described in a subsequent chapter, was a distinct official whose existence in the Maurya period is proved by the testimony of the Kaliṅga edicts of Aśoka.

Administration in the Post-Maurya Period

In the post-Maurya period ideas of kingship changed, but a ruler still considered it to be his duty to please his people. The official machinery of the Aśokan age continued to function at least in those parts of India which did not come under Greek and Scythian domination. The science of government (*arthavidyā*) was now regularly studied and its influence is seen in epigraphic references to the education of princes, insistence on prescribed

qualifications for appointment to high offices, classification of ministers, measures taken to secure the welfare of citizens both in urban and rural areas, and abstention from oppressive imposition of vexatious taxes like *Kara* (extra cess), *Vishṭi* (forced labour) and *Praṇaya* (benevolence) in addition to the customary *Bali* (tribute), *Sulka* (duty), and *Bhāga* (king's share of the produce).

Innovations in administration were, however, introduced in north-west India, the territory that was ruled by successive dynasties of foreign conquerors. One of the most important changes related to the system of provincial government. The system of government by hereditary officials with the Persian title of Satrap was introduced in Taxila, Mathurā, Ujjain and a few other places, and we have references even to functionaries with the Greek titles of *meridarch* and *strategos*. A body of counsellors (*mati sachiva*) seems to have been associated with some of the provincial rulers, but the rule of others was often of a purely military character. The influence of the system of military governors (*strategos*) is clearly seen in the appointment by Sātavāhana kings of district officers styled *mahāsenāpati*.

In spite of the prevalence of military rule in certain areas the old self-governing institutions did not wholly perish. Town councils (*nigama sabhā*) and officials styled *nagarākshadarśa* (city judges) are mentioned in several records and these correspond to the municipal commission and the *nagala viyohālaka* of the Maurya period. The affairs of the village continued to be controlled by the village functionaries led by the head-man. The village assembly afforded a field for co-operation between kings and villagers.

Social Conditions

Varṇa (caste) and *āśrama* (periods or stages of religious discipline), the two characteristic institutions of the Hindu social polity, reached a definite stage in the Maurya period. Greek writers inform us that no one was allowed to marry out of his own caste or to exercise any calling or art except his own. For instance, a soldier could not become a husbandman or an artisan a philosopher. It is, however, added by some that the sophists could be from any caste. Philosophers lived in simple style and spent their lives listening to serious discourses. Some of them became wood-dwellers (hylobioi) who subsisted on leaves and fruits and wore garments made from the bark of trees. These undoubtedly correspond to the *vānaprastha* order of Hindu anchorites. In the inscriptions of Aśoka we have mention of householders and wandering ascetics.

The system of the four *āśramas* was thus well established in the early Maurya age.

The rise of heterodox creeds, the influx of foreigners and many other causes must have affected to a certain extent the rigidity of caste rules. Instances of matrimonial alliances between Indian monarchs and foreign potentates are known, and a Sātavāhana record makes pointed reference to the mingling of the four castes which a king took considerable pains to prevent. The same king is eulogised as a promoter of the households of Brāhmaṇas and the lowly orders, doubtless the *Vaiśyas* and the *Śūdras*. The *Kautilīya Arthaśāstra* mentions agriculture, cattle breeding and trade as the common occupation of *Vaiśyas* and *Śūdras*, and, if Greek writers are to be believed, the old distinction between the *Vaiśya* and *Śūdra* was gradually obliterated and replaced by a new distinction between husbandmen, herdsmen, and traders, who constituted distinct castes. The physicians too emerge as a distinct group of philosophers next in point of honour to the wood-dwellers. Another remarkable feature of the period is the growth of two official castes, namely, the overseers and the councillors. The latter doubtless correspond to the *amātya* (or *amacca*) *kula* of the Pāli texts. The philosophers, the husbandmen, the herdsmen and hunters, the traders and artisans, the soldiers, the overseers and the councillors constituted the seven castes into which the population of India was divided in the days of Megasthenes. There is no reason to doubt that the Greek writer described the actual conditions as witnessed by him as opposed to the theory of the law-books. The restoration of the fourfold division of caste (*chāturvarna*) was sought by the great Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi, who referred to *dvijas* (Brāhmaṇas) and *avaras* (the lower orders) as objects of his special care and to the Kshatriyas as a conceited class whom he did much to repress. The cause of Gautamīputra's hostility to the warrior caste is not clear. It is possible that the ranks of the latter were being swelled by *Yavanas*, *Śakas*, and *Pahlavas* who are classed by the author of the *Mānava-dharmaśāstra* (Institutes of Manu) as degraded Kshatriyas. It is well known that the wrath of the great Sātavāhana was specially directed against the latter. Caste rules could not, however, be rigidly enforced. The Sātavāhanas themselves intermarried with Śakas, and Brāhmaṇas figure as generals and kings like Droṇa of old.

Regarding the position of women, Greek writers and contemporary epigraphs give us a few details. We are told that some of them pursued philosophy and lived a life of continence. But married women were denied the privilege of sharing with their husbands

a knowledge of the sacred lore. Polygamy was practised, especially by rulers and noblemen. The care of the king's person was entrusted to women, and we have the curious story that a woman who killed a king when drunk was rewarded by becoming the wife of his successor. Aśoka refers to women as particularly given to the performance of many trivial and worthless ceremonies. The practice of seclusion of women is hinted at by expressions like *Olodhana* occurring in inscriptions. Superintendents to look after women are mentioned. That the wife took a prominent share in religious activities by the side of her husband is clear from the record of the benefactions of Kāruvāki, the second queen of Aśoka himself. A glimpse of the way in which the life of a pious widow was spent is afforded by a Nāsik record which refers to the queen-dowager Gautamī Balaśrī as one who delighted in truth, charity, patience, and respect for life; who was bent on penance, self-control, restraint and abstinence, fully working out the type of a royal sage's wife (*rājarishibadhu*). Her son is eulogised for unquestioning obedience towards his mother. "Women though deserving of honour should not have independence" says the law-giver. But history records instances of royal ladies who guided the affairs of a realm on behalf of their children.

Slavery was an established institution. It is recognised not only by the law-books and the literature on polity, but is expressly referred to in inscriptions. Aśoka draws a distinction between the slave and the hired labourer and inculcates kind treatment for all. Arrian, however, probably relying on Megasthenes, states that "all the Indians are free and not one of them is a slave". Strabo also quotes Megasthenes as saying that none of the Indians employed slaves. But the same writer in describing the customs of the court of Pāṭaliputra observes that the care of the king's person is entrusted to women who are bought from their parents. Buying and selling of women are thus admitted. We have it on the authority of Hegesander and Athenaios that Amitrochates, that is Bindusāra, wrote to Antiochos asking him to purchase and send him not only sweet wine and dried figs but a sophist, only to be reminded that it was not lawful in Greece to sell a sophist. The implication is that a different law prevailed in the realm of Bindusāra. It has been pointed out by some scholars that Megasthenes may have been misled by the statement of Onesikritos about the non-existence of slavery in the lower Indus valley, or he may have heard of the principle laid down in Indian works on polity that no Aryan should be kept in the condition of permanent slavery.

About the manners and customs of the Indians we are told by Greek and Latin writers that they lived frugally and observed good order. Cultivators were mild and gentle. Theft was a thing of very rare occurrence and no Indian was accused of lying. The people never drank wine except at sacrifices and their food was principally a rice pottage. Their laws were simple. They had no suits about pledges or deposits nor did they require seals or witnesses, but they made their deposits and confided in each other. Their houses and property were generally left unguarded. We are further told that the Indians were a simple folk ignorant of writing and conducted all matters by memory. That the picture is a little overdrawn seems clear from what the same writers say about the different sections of the people in other passages. Thus Strabo tells us that fighting men when not engaged in active service passed their time in idleness and drinking. Speaking about a great synod that used to be held by philosophers, the same writer informs us that some of them commit their suggestions to writing. In another passage he quotes Nearchos as saying that Indians wrote letters on pieces of closely woven linen, while Curtius informs us that the bark of trees was used for writing on.

Games and Recreations

Inscriptions of the period refer frequently to *utsava* and *samāja*, festivities and merry gatherings. Kings considered it a duty to give practical demonstration of their sympathy with the people by liberality on such occasions. Dancing, singing and instrumental music must have formed an important part of all festivities. *Samājas* were often held in honour of a deity, e.g., Brahmā, Paśupati-Śiva, or Sarasvatī. A prominent feature of some of these assemblies was a joust of arms in which wrestlers from distant regions took part. Fights between men and between elephants and other animals are mentioned by Aelian, who also describes chariot races with teams of oxen and horses as practised in the imperial city of Pāṭaliputra. The combats of men and animals often led to shedding of blood, and this was perhaps the reason why Aśoka issued an edict forbidding certain types of *samāja* "in which he saw much offence", while admitting that there were other festal meetings which were excellent in his sight. Patañjali makes mention of dramatic representations by the *Śaubhikas* or *Śobhanikas* who gave before the eyes of the spectators an actual demonstration of the incidents mentioned in the plays. He also refers to *Granthikas* who related the fortunes of their subjects from birth to death.

Dice play afforded pleasure to many though its baneful effects are frequently alluded to. Buddhist writers refer to games on boards with eight or ten rows of squares from which chess play ultimately evolved. The Jaina *Sūtrakṛitāṅga* makes explicit mention of chess (*ashṭapada*), a game that must have become very popular by the time of Bāṇa's *Harsha-charita* and Ratnākara's *Haravijaya* (ninth century A.D.).

Condition of the Peasantry

The common people, as distinguished from the intellectual and official aristocracy, seem to have been divided into three main classes, namely, husbandmen, herdsmen and hunters, and traders and artisans. Husbandmen formed the most numerous class of the population. Their lot in the early Maurya period does not appear to have been hard. We are told by Greek observers that they were exempted from fighting and other public services, and devoted the whole of their time to tillage. Men of this class were regarded as public benefactors and were not molested in times of war and conflict. The land remaining unravaged produced heavy crops and supplied the inhabitants with all that was requisite to make life very enjoyable. Husbandmen lived in the country away from towns. They paid into the treasury a share of the produce of the soil besides a land tribute which may be identical with the *bali* of the epigraphs. In times of emergency they had to pay benevolences. But such imposts were levied on rare occasions and a Śaka ruler specially notes the fact that he carried out certain works without resorting to forced labour, extra cess or benevolences. In parts of India the lot of the rural population was probably a little harder. Some idea of the burden borne by the ordinary villagers in these tracts may be gathered from the immunities (*parihāra*) that were granted, according to certain records of the Sātavāhanas and their successors, to *Vāṭakas* and *Kshetras*, that is, gardens and fields, conferred on privileged individuals or communities by royal personages. Such plots were "not to be entered by royal officers, not to be touched by any of them, not to be dug for salt, not to be interfered with by the district police". A fuller list of various kinds of immunity is given in a Pallava record which says that a garden which belongs to the Brāhmaṇas is to be "free from *Kara* (extra cess), free from the taking of sweet and sour milk, free from troubles about salt and sugar, free from forced labour, free from the taking of the oxen in succession, free from the taking of grass and wood, free from the taking of vegetables and flowers".

The rural areas were exposed to danger from flood, fire and locusts. Philosophers are represented by classical writers as gathering together at the beginning of the year to forewarn the assembled multitude about droughts and wet weather and also about propitious winds and about diseases. Storehouses were set up to provide for emergencies due to pests. The state was enjoined by the *Arthaśāstra* writers to show favour in times of distress by distributing seeds and food. We have it on the testimony of Greek writers that the sovereign always made adequate provision against a coming deficiency, and never failed to prepare beforehand what would help in time of need. The duty of clearing the country of all sorts of wild beasts and birds which devoured the seeds sown by husbandmen devolved on herdsmen and hunters who lived in tents or on the hills. By hunting and trapping they freed the country from pests. Implements for agriculturists were made by the artisans, who were not only exempted from taxation but received maintenance from the royal exchequer. In return for these concessions they had to render to the state certain prescribed services.

Trade and Navigation

Kings as well as independent cities depended to a large extent on the tribute paid by the peasantry, but a considerable portion of the state revenues came from traders. In records of the period *śulka* is mentioned as an important source of royal income along with *bali* and *bhāga*. Maurya India had direct relations with Syria, Egypt and other countries of the Hellenistic West. There was a considerable body of foreign residents in the metropolis whose affairs were looked after by a special board of municipal commissioners. These foreigners could not all have been diplomatists. Some of them were in all probability traders. As early as the first century B.C. contact was established between India and the Roman empire. In the early centuries of the Christian era we have epigraphic as well as literary references to intercourse with China, the Hellenic world, Ceylon and Farther India. These are recorded in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions and the *Milindapañho*.

Classical writers bear testimony to the activity and daring of the Indian navigators. One writer narrates how, in the reign of Euergetes II (145–116 B.C.), an Indian was brought to the king by the coast guard of the Arabian Gulf. They reported that they had found him in a ship alone and half dead. He spoke a language which they could not understand. He was taught the Greek tongue and then he related how he had started from the coast

of India but lost his course and reached Egypt alone. All his companions had perished from hunger. If he were restored to his country he would point out to those sent with him the route by sea to India. Eudoxus of Cyzicus was one of the number thus sent. He brought back with him aromatics and precious stones. Another writer relates that a present was given by the king of the Suevi to a pro-consul in Gaul, consisting of some Indians who, sailing from India for the purpose of commerce, had been driven by storms into Germany.

Sweet wine and dried figs of the West were eagerly sought by a Maurya king in the third century B.C. In the first century A.D. presents for the king of Broach, which was one of the greatest marts in the east, included costly vessels of silver, singing boys, beautiful maidens for the harem, fine wines, thin clothing and the choicest ointments. The Westerners on their part imported articles of luxury including the fine muslin of the lower Gangetic region. Pliny bears testimony to the vast sums of money sent to India in payment for these commodities. As early as the fourth century B.C. the municipal authorities of Pāṭaliputra had to constitute a special board to superintend trade and commerce. Its members had charge of weights and measures and saw that products in their seasons were sold with an official stamp. In the first century A.D. trade between India and the West was greatly facilitated when the pilot Hippalus discovered how to lay his course straight across the ocean. The splendid river system of northern India rendered transport comparatively easy in this area. The Maurya government built ships and let them out on hire for the transport of merchandise. Communication was more difficult in the Deccan, where vast tracts were without roads and goods had to be carried with difficulty by wagons from Paithan and Tagara to the port of Broach.

Medium of Exchange

Foreign commerce brought a large quantity of specie to India, and we have already referred to Pliny's complaint about the drainage of Roman coins to this country. In the opinion of scholars the institution of a gold coinage by the Kushān imperial government from the time of Kadphises II is due to the influx of gold from the Roman empire. The Indians had an indigenous silver and copper coinage even in the pre-Maurya period. The gold *nishka*, though often used as a medium of exchange, probably did not in the early period possess all the characteristics of a

regular coinage. The silver coin of thirty-two *ratis* (58.56 grs.) was known to the writer of the *Mānava-dharmaśāstra* (Institutes of Manu) as *Purāṇa* or *Dharaṇa*. The copper coin of eighty *ratis* (146.4 grs.) was known as *Kārshāpaṇa*. Smaller copper coins styled *Kākaṇi* were also in circulation. The name Kārshāpaṇa was also applied to silver and gold coins particularly in the south. Buddhist commentators distinguished between the old (porāṇa) *nila kahāpaṇa* (Kārshāpaṇa), apparently a silver coin, and the new type of coinage introduced by the satrap Rudradāman which was three-fourths of the old *Kārshāpaṇa* in weight. An old *Kārshāpaṇa* was equivalent to twenty *māshas* in certain areas and sixteen *māshas* in others. The actual weight of the extant silver coins of the western satraps is from thirty-four to thirty-six grains. The rate of exchange between the *Kārshāpaṇa* of thirty-six grains and the gold coins of the period, the *Suvarṇa* of one hundred and twenty-four grains, was as 1 to 35. The ratio of silver to gold at this time was approximately 1 to 10.

Industry

The importance of the manufacturing industry in the Maurya period is emphasised by the fact that one committee of the municipal board of Pāṭaliputra was specially entrusted with the supervision of manufactured articles in the metropolis. Greek writers make pointed reference to the manufacture of arms and agricultural implements and the building of ships mainly for purposes of river navigation. Strabo speaks of dresses worked in gold and adorned with precious stones and also flowered robes made of fine muslin worn by the wealthy classes, and umbrellas used by their attendants. Indian muslin was exported in large quantities to the Roman empire in the first century A.D. Muslins of the finest sort were then called Gangetic and were produced in the valley of the lower Ganges. The fame of Eastern Bengal and the Gangetic delta for its white and soft *dūkūla* is also vouched for by the *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*. The fabric produced in Northern Bengal was black and as smooth as the surface of a gem. Muslins in great quantity were also exported from several market towns of southern India. The North-West was famous for its cotton cloth and silk yarn. The weaving industry gave employment to hundreds of helpless women and special arrangements were made for those who did not stir out of their houses. Weavers and other handicraftsmen were often organised into economic corporations called *Śreṇīs*. *Śreṇīs* or guilds were very much in evidence during this

period. Records of the Sātavāhana age refer to guilds of weavers, braziers, oil-millers, bamboo-workers, corn-dealers, and of artisans fabricating hydraulic engines. These guilds often served the purpose of modern banks.

Religion

For a description of the state of religion in the days of the Imperial Mauryas and their successors we have to rely on Greek and Latin authors, inscriptions and coins, the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali and the testimony of later writers. The worship of the Vedic gods was still far from obsolescent. Zeus Ombrios, the rain-god, worshipped by the Indians, probably represents the Vedic Indra or Parjanya. Indra and Varuṇa are invoked as late as the Sātavāhana period. But side by side with them appear other deities whose popularity dates from the epic period. The river Ganges, for example, is mentioned as an object of worship by classical writers. Quintus Curtius states that an image of Herakles was carried in front of the army of Poros as he advanced against the Macedonian conqueror. The connection of the Indian Herakles with the Śūrasenas and the city of Mathurā suggests his identification with Vāsudeva or Saṅkarshaṇa. Patañjali refers to the exhibition and sale by the Mauryas of images of Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha. Skanda and Viśākha retained their popularity till the Kushāna period when they appeared on the coins of Huvishka. Even Aśoka, in many respects a great innovator, took pride in calling himself *devānaṁpiya*, Beloved of the Gods.

Sacrifices are very much in evidence during this age. Of the occasions on which the Maurya king, according to Strabo, went out in times of peace, one was for the performance of sacrifice. Sacrifices were also offered by private persons and the services of "philosophers" were requisitioned for the purpose. The people of India, generally sober, freely indulged in drink when these ceremonies were performed. Aśoka tried to put a stop to the killing of living creatures on such occasions. Vaishṇava reformers made an attempt to spiritualise sacrifices by giving them a new ethical meaning. But a great Brāhmaṇic revival followed the rise of the houses of Pushyamitra, Simuka-Sātavāhana and Śiva-skanda-varman Pallava. Rites like the *Aśvamedha* and *Vājapeya* came to be celebrated by princes on a grand scale.

From the beginning of the period Brāhmaṇism had to reckon with the heterodox creeds of the Ājīvikas, Jainas and Buddhists which obtained a firm hold on certain sections of the people,

especially in Oudh, Bihār and Orissa. Tradition says that Chandragupta and Samprati of the Maurya dynasty were Jainas. The epithet *Vṛishala*, applied to the first Maurya by a Brāhmaṇical playwright, makes it likely that in his later days he swerved from strict orthodoxy. An undoubted Jaina king of this period was Khāravela, who, strange to say, engaged in sanguinary conflicts with his neighbours in spite of the quietist teachings of the Arhats and Siddhas, saints and perfect beings, whom he invokes at the beginning of his inscription. Jainism enjoyed special pre-eminence at Mathurā during the early centuries of the Christian era along with the cult of the Nāgas or Serpent deities like Dadhikarṇa. The rival sect of the Ājīvikas enjoyed, like many other denominations, the bounty of the emperors Aśoka and Daśaratha who granted cave dwellings for these sectaries. If tradition is to be believed the Ājīvikas were also favoured by Bindusāra.

Buddhism, as is well known, secured the imperial patronage of Aśoka and became, mainly through his efforts, a world religion. It received marked favour from Menander and made a convert of the great Kanishka. But the Buddhism of Kanishka differed much from the simple ethical creed of the great Maurya. The human teacher of the four noble truths and the noble eight-fold path now became not merely a *deva* (deity) but *devātideva* (the god of gods). Like the Blessed Lord of the Bhāgavatas or Vaishṇavas he is repeatedly born in the world of the living to remove the affliction of creatures and reveal to them the true law. Images of the teacher now appear in Buddhist sculpture and receive the devout worship of the faithful, like the icons of Brāhmaṇic deities. Side by side with the Buddha appear the *dhyāni* Buddhas and Bodhisatvas. The newer Buddhism was known as the *Mahāyāna* or the Great Vehicle to distinguish it from the older creed which came to be styled *Hīnayāna*. The formulation of its basic ideas is associated with the name of Nāgārjuna, a philosopher of the Sātavāhana period. In the early centuries of the Christian era Buddhism spread to China and several other parts of central, eastern and southern Asia. The Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions make mention of the fraternities of monks who converted Kāshmīr, Gandhāra, China, Chilāta, Tosali, Aparānta, Vaṅga, Vanavāsi, Yavana, Damila, Palura and the island of Ceylon. The introduction of Buddhism into China is traditionally attributed to a sage named Kaśyapa Mātaṅga. There is, however, evidence to show that Buddhist scriptures were communicated to the Chinese by a Yue-chi Chief as early as 2 B.C.

Another Indian faith which showed great missionary activity

was Bhāgavatism or Vaishṇavism, which already in the second century B.C. spread amongst the Greeks of the Indian borderland. Heliodoros, the ambassador of Antialkidas, king of Taxila, set up a Garuḍa column at Besnagar in honour of Vāsudeva, the God of gods. Several contemporary epigraphs bear testimony to the prevalence, especially in Central India and the Deccan, of the cult of Vāsudeva and Saṅkarshaṇa, that is Kṛishṇa and his brother. The rival cult of Śiva enjoyed the patronage of Kadphises II and Vāsudeva Kushān. A foreign religion, Christianity, claims to have established some connection with the Indian borderland in the days of Gondophernes. The worship of Babylonian, Iranian and other non-Indian deities like Nanaia, Mithra or Mihira (Sun), Mao (Moon), and Pharro (Fire) in the Kushān empire is proved by numismatic evidence. The cult of Mihira attained much popularity, thanks to the endeavours of the Magian priesthood.

Literary Activity

It is difficult to assign any extant Indian work definitely to the Maurya age. Three works, the *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, the *Kalpasūtra* of Bhadrabāhu and the Buddhist *Kathā vatthu* are traditionally attributed to personages who are said to have flourished in the Maurya period, but the ascription in all these cases has not met with general acceptance. A considerable body of literature is presupposed by Patañjali, usually regarded as a contemporary of Pushyamitra. Though many of the compositions mentioned by him existed long before the Mauryas, some of them may have been products of the Maurya epoch. The Grammarian knows the Pāṇḍu epic and refers to dramatic recitals and the performance of *Kaṁsabadha* (slaying of Kaṁsa by Kṛishṇa) and *Balibandha* (binding of Bali by Vishṇu in his Dwarf Incarnation). He also alludes to *ākhyānas* or tales of Yavakrīta, Yayāti, Vāsavadattā and others, and makes mention of a *Vārarucha Kāvya*. That parts of the *Mahābhārata* were composed during the Maurya or early post-Maurya period appears probable from references to the unconquerable Aśoka and also to a Yavana overlord of the lower Indus valley and his compatriot Dattāmitra, possibly Demetrios. The reference in the sister epic to mingled hordes of Yavanas and Śakas suggests that the *Rāmāyaṇa*, too, received accretions in the Graeco-Scythian age. The *Mānavadharma śāstra* which mentions the Yavanas, Śakas, Pāradas, and Pahlavas among Kshatriya clans which were degraded for non-observance of sacred rites and neglect of Brāhmaṇas may also be assigned to this period.

The epoch under review probably saw the composition of the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali, an exposition of the grammatical aphorisms of Pāṇini. Another grammatical work, the *Kātantra* or *Kalāpaka* of Śarvavarman, is traditionally assigned to the Sātavāhana period. To the same age probably belongs the *Brihat kathā* of Guṇāḍhya. The *Gāthā Saptaśati* attributed to Hāla, a Śātavāhana king, bears signs of a much later date. The epoch of the Kushāns produced the great work of Aśvaghosha, poet, dramatist and philosopher. Among other celebrities of the period mention may be made of Charaka, Suśruta, Nāgārjuna, Kumāralāta and possibly Āryadeva.

The Pāli Buddhist canon is said to have been reduced to writing in the first century B.C. The celebrated work known as the *Milindapañho*, or the Questions of Menander, is also usually regarded as a product of the period under review. Some scholars believe that the astronomical work of Garga, the *Paumachariya* of Vimalasūri, portions of the *Divyāvadāna* as well as the *Lalitavistara* and the *Saddharma puṇḍarīka* are also to be assigned to this age.

Greek and Roman Influence

For centuries during the period under review India was in intimate contact with the Graeco-Roman world. Embassies were exchanged with the Hellenic powers by the sovereigns of Magadha and Mālwa. Indian philosophers, traders and adventurers were to be found in the intellectual circles of Athens and in the markets of Alexandria. The first of the Mauryas had entered into a marriage contract with a Greek potentate. His son was eager to secure the services of a Greek sophist. The third and the greatest of the Mauryas entrusted the government of a wealthy province and the execution of important irrigation works to a Yavana chief. The services of Greek engineers seem to have been requisitioned by the greatest of the Kushāns in the early centuries of the Christian era. Greek influence on Indian coinage and iconography is unmistakable.

A Greek orator, Dion Chrysostom, informs us that the poetry of Homer was sung by the Indians, who had translated it into their own language and modes of expression so that even Indians were not unacquainted with the woes of Priam, the weeping and wailing of Andromache and Hecuba and the heroic feats of Achilles and Hector. The reference may be to the *Mahābhārata*, but the possibility of an actual translation of the Greek epic is not entirely excluded. Indian writers bear testimony to the proficiency of the

Greeks in the sciences, and one author admits that they were honoured as though they were *Ṛishis* (Sages). Western singers were welcomed at the court of Broach. On the other hand Greek authors speak with admiration of the sages of India. Hellenic rulers and statesmen listened with respectful attention to Indian philosophers. One of the greatest of the Indo-Greek kings, Menander, showed great predilection for Buddhist teaching and issued coins of Buddhist type. A Greek ambassador erected a Garuḍa column in honour of Vāsudeva. Greek *meridarchs* are mentioned in Kharoshṭhī inscriptions as establishing Buddhist relics and sanctuaries. Indian cultural influence on the Greeks of Egypt has been traced in the Oxyrhynchus papyri.

CHAPTER X

THE GUPTA EMPIRE

The Rise of the Gupta Power

THE Scythian conquerors of India had received their first great check in the Deccan. Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi of the Sātavāhana dynasty had extirpated the Kshaharāta race and dealt crushing blows to the Śakas, Yavanas, and Pahlavas. The power of the invaders was, however, still unshaken in the north where the "Son of Heaven" ruled in undiminished glory in the first part of the second century A.D. Even in Western India there was à Śaka revival under the great satrap Rudradāman I. Chinese evidence shows that the Yue-chi power was still far from being broken in A.D. 230. The rise of the Nāgas in the Jumnā valley pushed the Northern Scythians further towards the north-west borderland of India, but the descendants of Rudradāman continued to rule over the fair provinces of Mālwa and Kāṭhiāwār. The later Scythian rulers proved to be tyrants. A Brāhmaṇa historian of the seventh century A.D. refers to one of them as *Parakalatrakāmuka,* "coveting the wife of another". An epic poet makes the prophecy that Śakas and other *Mlechchha* (barbarian) kings will rule unrighteously in the evil age to come. The members of the four orders will not adhere to their duties and the country will become a desert. Harassed by barbarians the earth in an earlier epoch had taken refuge in the strong arms of Chandragupta Maurya. She now found shelter in another line of Chandraguptas.

Chandra Gupta I

The first Chandra Gupta of the new line, though the third member of his dynasty to be mentioned in inscriptions, was the earliest to assume the imperial title of *Mahārājādhirāja*, "supreme King of great Kings". Like the great Bimbisāra he strengthened his position by a matrimonial alliance with the powerful family of Lichchhavis then controlling portions of Bihār and perhaps even Nepāl. The Lichchhavi princess Kumāradevī must have

brought to her husband's family an enormous accession of power and prestige. Before the death of her husband the Gupta sway very probably extended to Allahābād, Oudh and South Bihār, territories assigned to the family by the Purāṇic chronicles at a time when the Nāga power was still unbroken in the Ganges–Jumnā valley. It is believed that the Gupta era commencing from A.D. 320 originated with Chandra Gupta I. An important act of this king was the holding of an assembly of councillors and members of the royal family at which Prince Samudra Gupta was formally nominated successor to the imperial throne of the Guptas.

Samudra Gupta

Samudra Gupta, the next king, is probably the greatest of his house. The exact limits of his reign are not known. He probably



SAMUDRA GUPTA

came to the throne sometime after A.D. 320 and died before A.D. 380, the earliest known date of his successor. He is not altogether unknown to tradition. He appears to be mentioned in the *Ārya-mañju-śrī-mūla kalpa*, and also in the *Tantrikāmandaka*, a Javanese text. A Chinese writer, Wang-hiuen-tse, refers to an embassy sent to him by Śrī Meghavarma (-Vaṇṇa), king of Ceylon, to seek permission to build at Bodh-Gayā a monastery for Ceylonese pilgrims. But the most detailed and authentic record of his reign is preserved in two contemporary documents, viz. the Allahābād Pillar Inscription, a eulogy of the emperor composed by Harisheṇa,

and an epigraph found at Eran in the Central Provinces. Certain copper plates purporting to belong to his reign are regarded by scholars as spurious. Samudra Gupta also left an extensive coinage. Some important events of his reign are known from this source and the records of his successors.

The eulogy of Harisheṇa is damaged in several parts so that it is difficult to follow the sequence of events. The Gupta monarch seems at first to have made an onslaught on the neighbouring realms of Ahichchhatrā (Rohilkhaṇḍ) and Padmāvatī (in Central India) then ruled by Achyuta and Nāgasena. He captured a prince of the Kota family and then rested on his laurels for a period in the city named Pushpa, i.e. Pāṭaliputra. Whether the Kota dynasty actually ruled in Pushpapura or Pāṭaliputra about this time, and were dispossessed of it by the Gupta conqueror, is not made clear in the damaged epigraph that has come down to us. Other indications point to Śrāvastī or a territory still farther to the north as the realm where the *Kota-kula* ruled. A subsequent passage of the inscription names along with Achyuta and Nāgasena several other princes of Āryāvarta or the upper Ganges valley and some adjoining tracts, who were violently exterminated. These include Rudradeva, Matila, Nāgadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapati Nāga, Nandin and Balavarman. The identity of most of the princes named in this list is still uncertain. Matila has been connected by some scholars with the Bulandshahr district in the centre of the Ganges–Jumnā Doāb, while Ganapati Nāga seems to be associated by numismatic evidence with Narwar and Besnagar in Central India. Chandravarman is a more elusive but interesting figure. Suggestions have been made that he is identical with a ruler of the same name, the son of Siṁhavarman, mentioned as the lord of Pushkarana in an inscription discovered at Śuśunia in the Bankura district of Western Bengal. His name has also been traced in the famous Chandravarmankoṭ in the Kotwalipāḍā pargana of the Faridpur district of Eastern Bengal. Bolder theorists have identified his father Siṁhavarman with a prince of Mandasor, the father of Naravarman, and located Pushkarana at Pokarna in Mārwār. Some have gone so far as to suggest that the Chandravarman of Samudra Gupta's record is not only a ruler of Rājputāna and a brother of Naravarman of Mandasor, but he is no other than the great emperor Chandra of the Meherauli Iron Pillar near Delhi. The last-mentioned scholars were apparently not aware of the existence of a place called Pokharan in the district of Bankura itself near the site of the record of Chandravarman. They also forget that no prince bearing the name

Chandravarman, still less a Chandravarman of Pokarna in Mārwār, is mentioned in any record of the Mandasor family, and that King Chandra of the Meherauli epigraph, who is called simply Chandra and not Chandravarman, is an emperor, the reputed conqueror of the whole of India, who can hardly be identified with the ruler of Samudra Gupta's record who is classed with a host of comparatively insignificant princes.

The great Gupta conqueror is next represented as reducing to the status of servants the forest kings apparently of the Vindhyan region. In an earlier passage we have reference to a grand expedition to the south in the course of which the emperor captured and again set at liberty all the kings of the Deccan. The rulers specially named in this connection are Mahendra of Kosala in the Upper Mahānadī valley, Vyāghra-rāja or the Tiger king of the great wilderness named Mahākāntāra, Manṭarāja of Kurala, Mahendragiri of Pishṭapura or Pithapuram in the Godāvarī district, Svāmidatta of Koṭṭura somewhere in the northern part of the Madras Presidency, Damana of Eraṇḍapalla possibly in the same region, Vishṇugopa, the Pallava king of Kāñchī in the Chingleput district, Nīlarāja of Avamukta, Hastivarman, the Śālaṅkāyana king of Veṅgī lying between the Godāvarī and the Kṛishṇā, Ugrasena of Palakka, probably in the Nellore district, Kubera of Devarāshṭra in the Vizagapatam district and Dhanañjaya of Kusthalapur, possibly in North Arcot.

The reference to the liberation of the southern potentates shows that no attempt was made to incorporate the kingdoms of the Deccan south of the Nerbudda and the Mahānadī into the Gupta empire. From the territorial point of view the result of the brilliant campaigns of Samudra Gupta was the addition to the Gupta dominions described in the Purāṇas, of Rohilkhaṇḍ, the Ganges–Jumnā Doāb, part of Eastern Mālwa, perhaps some adjoining tracts and several districts of Bengal. The annexation of part of Eastern Mālwa is confirmed by the Eran inscription. The suzerainty of the great Gupta, as distinguished from his direct rule, extended over a much wider area, and his imperious command was obeyed by princes and peoples far beyond the frontiers of the provinces directly administered by his own officers. Among his vassals we find mention of the kings of Samataṭa (in Eastern Bengal), Ḍavāka (probably near Nowgong in Assam), Kāmarūpa (in Western Assam), Nepāl, Kartṛipura (Garhwal and Jalandhar) and several tribal states of the eastern and central Punjab, Mālwa and Western India, notably the Mālavas, Yaudheyas, Madrakas, Ābhīras and Sanākānīkas. The descendants of the Kushān "Son of Heaven",

many chieftains of the Śakas, the Ceylonese and several other insular peoples hastened to propitiate the great Gupta by the offer of homage and tribute or presents. It was presumably after his military triumphs that the emperor completed the famous rite of the horse-sacrifice.

Great as were the military laurels won by Samudra Gupta, his personal accomplishments were no less remarkable. His court poet extols his magnanimity towards the fallen, his polished intellect, his knowledge of the scriptures, his poetic skill and his proficiency in music. The last trait of the emperor's character is well illustrated by the lyrist type of his coins. He gathered round himself a galaxy of poets and scholars, not the least eminent among whom was the warrior-poet Harisheṇa who resembled his master in his versatility. Both Samudra Gupta and Aśoka set before their minds the ideal of world-conquest by means of *parākrama*. *Parākrama*, in the case of the Maurya, was not warlike activity but vigorous and effective action to propagate the old Indian morality as well as the special teaching of the Buddha. In the case of the Gupta it was an intense military and intellectual activity intended to bring about the political unification of *Āryāvarta*, the discomfiture of the foreign tormentors of the holy land and an efflorescence of the old Indian culture in all its varied aspects—religious, poetic, artistic.

Chandra Gupta II Vikramāditya

Samudra Gupta was succeeded, according to contemporary epigraphs, by his son Chandra Gupta II surnamed Vikramāditya who ruled from *c.* A.D. 380 to 413. Some recent writers have traced hints in literature of uncertain date and in inscriptions of the ninth and tenth centuries A.D., that the immediate successor of Samudra Gupta was his son Rāma Gupta, a weak ruler, who consented to surrender his wife Dhruvadevī to a Śaka tyrant. The honour of the queen was saved by Chandra Gupta, younger brother of Rāma Gupta, who killed the Śaka, replaced his brother on the imperial throne and married Dhruvadevī. We do not know how far the story embodies genuine historical tradition. No prince named Rāma Gupta is known to contemporary epigraphy, and the story shows signs of growth. The earliest version to which a definite date may be assigned is that of Bāṇa who simply refers to the destruction of a libidinous Śaka king by Chandra Gupta disguised as a female. There is no reference here either to Rāma Gupta or to Dhruvadevī. The matter should, therefore, be

regarded as *sub judice* and can only be decided when contemporary evidence confirming the story is forthcoming.

Chandra Gupta II carried on the policy of "world-conquest" pursued by his predecessor. He effected his purpose partly by pacific overtures and partly by military activity. Political marriages occupy a prominent place in the foreign policy of the Guptas as of the Hapsburgs and Bourbons of Europe. The Lichchhavi alliance of the real founder of the dynasty, and the acceptance of presents of maidens from the courts of contemporary potentates by Samudra Gupta, served to consolidate the nascent Gupta power as the Rajput marriages strengthened that of the Timurid sovereigns of a later date. A further step in the same direction was taken by Chandra Gupta II when he conciliated the Nāga chieftains of the upper and central provinces by accepting the hand of the princess Kuberanāgā and allied himself with the powerful family of the Vākāṭakas of the Deccan by giving his daughter Prabhāvatī in marriage to Rudrasena II. Thus strengthened, the king marched to Eastern Mālwa accompanied by his minister Vīrasena-Śāba and possibly his general Āmrakārddava. He received the homage of the Sanākānīka chieftain of the locality and took measures to wipe out Śaka rule in Western Mālwa and Kāṭhiāwār. His efforts were crowned with success as we know from the evidence of coins and of Bāṇa's '*Harsha-charita*.

On many of his coins Chandra Gupta II receives the epithet Vikramāditya. In certain records of the twelfth century A.D. he is represented as the lord of the city of Ujjain as well as Pāṭaliputra. The cool courage he showed in going to fight with the Śakas and killing their chieftain in the enemy's own city entitles him to the epithets "*Sāhasāṅka*" and "*Śakāri*". These facts have led scholars to identify him with the Vikramāditya Śakāri of legend, whose court is said to have been adorned by "nine gems" including Kālidāsa and Varāhamihira. The tradition about the nine gems is, however, late. It is uncertain if all of them actually flourished about the same time. Varāhamihira at any rate is to be placed after Āryabhaṭa, who was born in the latter half of the fifth century A.D. But if Mallinātha is to be believed, Kālidāsa may have been a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II, for the great commentator mentions as one of his opponents the famous Dignāgācharya who is assigned to this period.

Another notable contemporary of Chandra Gupta II was Fa Hien. The celebrated Chinese pilgrim was struck with admiration by the famous royal palace and the houses for dispensing charity

and medicine at Pāṭaliputra. He speaks highly of the system of government in the Madhya-deśa and the benevolence of the people, especially the moneyed classes.

Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta

The successor of Chandra Gupta II was his son Kumāra Gupta I Mahendrāditya, whose known dates range from A.D. 415 to 455. He maintained his hold over the vast empire of his forebears, which now extended from North Bengal to Kāṭhiāwār and from the Himālayas to the Nerbudda. Numismatic evidence seems to suggest that his influence at one time extended southwards, possibly as far as the Satara district of the Deccan. His achievements were sufficiently remarkable to entitle him to perform the famous rite of the horse-sacrifice. But his last days were not happy. A people known as the Pushyamitras, probably located in or near Mekala in the Nerbudda valley, developed great power and wealth and reduced the imperial government to such straits that a prince imperial had to spend a whole night on bare earth. The sovereign himself seems to have perished before the issues were finally decided in favour of the imperial family, mainly through the exertions of Prince Skanda Gupta.

The victorious prince had soon to deal with a more formidable enemy, the Huns. But he succeeded in repelling their early invasions and recovering most of the imperial provinces, which were placed under special Wardens of the Marches. In one inscription the goddess of royal fortune is said to have chosen him as her lord, having discarded the other princes. The full import of this passage is somewhat obscure. It is, however, certain that the superior ability and prowess of Skanda Gupta in a time of crisis led to his choice as ruler in preference to other possible claimants. The choice of Harsha in the seventh century apparently furnishes a parallel.

Proud of his success against the barbarians Skanda Gupta assumed the title of Vikramāditya. The memory of his achievements is popularly preserved in the story of Vikramāditya, son of Mahendrāditya, narrated in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*. The reign of Skanda Gupta probably terminated about A.D. 467.

The Last Days of the Gupta Empire

The history of the ensuing period is obscure. Inscriptions prove that the Gupta sovereignty was acknowledged in the Jabbalpur

region in the Nerbudda valley as late as A.D. 528, and in North Bengal till A.D. 543-544. A Kumāra Gupta is known to have been ruling in A.D. 473–474, a Budha Gupta from A.D. 476–477 to c. A.D. 495, a Vainya Gupta in or about A.D. 508 and a Bhānu Gupta in A.D. 510-511. Bhitari and Nālandā seal inscriptions disclose the names of four kings, Puru Gupta, son of Kumāra Gupta I; Narasiṁha Gupta (Bālāditya), son of Puru Gupta; Kumāra Gupta, son of Narasiṁha, and Vishṇu Gupta, son of Kumāra Gupta, who must be assigned to this obscure period. Narasiṁha Bālāditya has been identified with the conqueror of Mihiragula, a Hun tyrant, whose power was finally broken before A.D. 533-534. But the existence of several Bālādityas renders this identification doubtful. Another theory splits up the Gupta dynasty into two rival branches, one of which consisted of the kings mentioned in the Bhitari and Nālandā seals. The other included Kumāra Gupta of A.D. 473–474, Budha Gupta and Bhānu Gupta. But Budha Gupta is now known to have been a son of Puru Gupta, and the incontrovertible facts of his reign render the theory of a partition of the empire in the closing years of the fifth century A.D. unworthy of credence. A more plausible conjecture identifies Kumāra, son of Narasiṁha, with the Kumāra Gupta who ruled in A.D. 473–474. The only difficulty in accepting this view is the abnormal shortness of the period assignable to Puru Gupta and his son Narasiṁha (A.D. 467–473). But the difficulty is not insuperable, and we know of other instances of short reigns in the later days of an imperial dynasty.

Inscriptions make it clear that the Gupta empire maintained some sort of unity till the days of Budha Gupta (476–495) though it might have lost some of its westernmost provinces. After Budha Gupta the Huns, under Toramāna and Mihirakula or Mihiragula, undoubtedly pushed their conquests deep into the Indian interior as far as Eran in Eastern Mālwa. But the Huns received a check in the time of a king named Bālāditya who may have been identical with Bhānu Gupta, the hero of a "very famous battle" fought in the region of Eran. The Hun imperial power was finally shattered by Yaśodharman, an energetic and ambitious chief of Mandasor in Western Mālwa before A.D. 533-534. Yaśodharman seems to have made use of his victory to establish his own supremacy. But the Gupta power undoubtedly survived in North Bengal till A.D. 543–544. Even in later times we find a king whose name ended in Gupta fighting on the banks of the Brahmaputra. Other "Gupta" princes who are associated with Mālwa and Magadha came into contact with the rising power of the Pushyabhūti family of Thānesar and Kanauj in the latter half

of the sixth and first half of the seventh century A.D. These "Later Guptas" restored the glory of the line to a certain extent under Ādityasena in the latter half of the seventh century, and used titles indicative of imperial rank. They disappeared in the eighth century when Magadha became the battle-ground of the rival empires of Yaśovarman of Kanauj and an unnamed king of Gauḍa lineage.

CHAPTER XI

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE HUNS, AND THE ASCENDANCY OF KANAUJ, KĀSHMĪR AND GAUḌA

The Huns

IN spite of the heroic efforts of Skanda Gupta, the Gupta empire in its entirety did not long survive the shock it received from the uprising of the Pushyamitras and the incursions of the Huns. The hereditary character of the officialdom, particularly in some of the outlying provinces, must have let loose centrifugal forces which gathered strength as the central authority weakened owing to the onslaughts of the barbarians. There were signs of degeneration and of dissension in the imperial line itself, and the devotion of the more loyal feudatories could not save the empire from its impending doom. So far as our present knowledge goes Budha Gupta was the last emperor of the main line of the Guptas who preserved some semblance of unity in the major part of the empire. When he passed away the Huns were safely entrenched in the Śiālkoṭ region and Eastern Mālwa, provinces that had owned the Gupta suzerainty since the days of Samudra Gupta.

The Huns were a race of fierce barbarians who issued from the steppes of Central Asia and had in the fifth century A.D. spread in devastating hordes over some of the fairest provinces of the Roman empire in the West and the Gupta empire in India. Their early incursions into India were repulsed by Skanda Gupta, but they renewed their attacks when the great emperor was no more. Towards the close of the fifth and early in the sixth century A.D. the Hun suzerainty rapidly spread in all directions, thanks to the vigour and energy of Toramāna and his son Mihiragula. The last-mentioned ruler is known not only from inscriptions and coins, but from tradition recorded by Hiuen Tsang and Kalhaṇa, both of whom bear witness to his tyrannical rule. He has further been identified with the White Hun King Gollas mentioned by the monk Cosmas Indikopleustes, and also with the Yetha ruler of Gandhāra to whom Song Yun, the Chinese pilgrim, paid a visit in A.D. 520. An account of his feats is also supposed to be preserved in the Jaina stories about Kalkirāja. The expansion of the Hun

rule in Central India seems to have been checked by the loyal feudatories of the Guptas, and their imperial power was finally shattered by Yaśodharman of Mandasor. Petty Hun chieftains continued to rule over a circumscribed area in North-West India and Mālwa, waging a perpetual warfare with the indigenous princes till they were absorbed into the Rājput population. It is significant that the new aspirants for imperial dominion in Āryāvarta, Yaśodharman, the Maukharis, the princes of the house of Pushyabhūti, and the Pālas set much store on success against these outlandish barbarians who harassed their country as the Yavanas and Śaka-Pahlavas did of old.

Yaśodharman

Yaśodharman, the earliest of these aspirants, was a Śaiva ruler who has left records of his achievements at Mandasor. In these he claims to have granted protection to the earth when it was afflicted by the cruel and vicious kings of the age who transgressed the rules of good conduct. He is further described as a *Samrāṭ* or emperor who extended his sway over territories which even the all-conquering Gupta lords and Hun chieftains had failed to subdue. Homage was done to him by chiefs from the neighbourhood of the Brahmaputra up to the Eastern Ghāṭs and from the snowy heights of the Himālayas down to the Western Ocean. The Hun king Mihiragula, whose head had never previously been bowed in the humility of obeisance to any mortal, was compelled to do reverence to Yaśodharman's feet.

There has been a tendency on the part of some scholars to minimise the achievements of this great king. On the other hand there are not wanting writers who identify him with the great Vikramāditya Śakāri of Ujjain, the patron of Kālidāsa. It is forgotten by the latter that no contemporary record gives him the title Vikramāditya, that the foreign enemies he vanquished were Huns and not Śakas, and that the only city with which he is closely associated is Daśapura or Mandasor, and not Ujjain. Little is known about his ancestry or successors. A family st[yled] *Naigama* held the important post of viceroy of the territory between the Vindhyas and the Sindhu (either the sea or some stream in Central India) in his day. Portions of Mālwa were governed by the Maitrakas, Kalachuris and Guptas shortly after Yaśodharman. The imitation of Gupta coins and assumption of titles characteristic of kings of the Gupta family by the Kalachuris show that no wide interval separates their rule from that of the last of the Imperial Guptas of Mālwa.

The dominant powers in India in the latter half of the sixth century A.D. were the Maukharis in the Ganges valley and the Chalukyas of the Deccan. The history of the Chalukyas will be treated

The Maukharis

The Maukharis claimed descent from Aśvapati of epic fame. They figured as feudatory chieftains or generals in Magadha and Rājputāna from very early times and possibly came into contact with the Kadambas of South-West India. The family rose to prominence under Īśānavarman, who is the first to assume the imperial title of *Mahārājādhirāja* or supreme king of great kings. From a record of his reign dated A.D. 554 we learn that he won victories over the Andhras, the Śūlikas and the Gauḍas. The Andhras and the Śūlikas may have reference to the rulers of the Vishṇukuṇḍin and Chalukya families of the Eastern and Western Deccan, while the Gauḍas, whose "proper realm" lay not far from the sea, are apparently the precursors of Śaśānka of Karṇasuvarṇa (in Western Bengal), the enemy of Rājyavardhana of Thānesar, and of the Gauḍa rival of Yaśovarman of Kanauj in the eighth century A.D. Īśānavarman also came into conflict with the later Gupta king, Kumāra Gupta, probably the third or fourth monarch of that name. The son of the latter is represented as "breaking up the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants, belonging to the Maukhari, which had thrown aloft in battle the troops of the Huns". It is clear that the Maukharis, like Skanda Gupta and Yaśodharman, carried on the struggle against the foreign invaders, the destruction of whose power was necessary to realise their dream of restoring the fallen fabric of imperialism in Northern India.

Īśānavarman was followed by at least three other princes, Śarvavarman, Avantivarman, and Grahavarman. The last-mentioned ruler was a son of Avantivarman. He married Rājyaśrī, daughter of Prabhākaravardhana of the Pushyabhūti family of Thānesar and sister to Rājyavardhana and his more celebrated brother Harsha. But the alliance could not save the Maukhari ruler from destruction at the hands of the "wicked lord of Mālava", who has been plausibly identified with Deva Gupta of the inscriptions of Harsha. Rājyaśrī, the widowed Maukhari queen, was cast into prison at Kanauj. The death of Grahavarman was avenged by his brother-in-law Rājyavardhana, the eldest son and successor of Prabhākaravardhana. But Rājyavardhana himself was "allured into confidence by false civilities on the part of (Śaśāṅka) the king

of Gauḍa, and then weaponless, confiding and alone, despatched in his own quarters". The decree of fate thus deprived the kingdom of Thānesar, as well as that of the Maukharis, of their rulers.

Harsha

At this juncture the statesmen of Kanauj, on the advice of their leading noble Bani (Bhaṇḍi), seem to have offered the crown to Harsha, the brother of Rājyavardhana and of Rājyaśrī, who was destined to revive the imperial memories of the Gupta epoch and obtain recognition as the lord paramount of the whole of Northern India, even from his bitterest enemies. The event happened in A.D. 606, the starting-point of the Harsha era. Both Bāṇa and Hiuen Tsang refer to Harsha's reluctance to mount the throne. This is taken by some to be due to the fact that he was not the rightful heir to the throne of Kanauj, which may have formed part of the dominions of his sister's Maukhari husband whose line was not yet extinct. But this view does not explain Harsha's hesitation to succeed his elder brother. Moreover the exact identity of the ruling authority at Kanauj immediately before the time of Harsha is not clear from the narrative of Bāṇa and the Chinese writers. Hiuen Tsang's account leaves the impression that it was included within the territory of the "murdered king", the elder brother of Harsha. The chief statesman of Kanauj was Bhaṇḍi, a prominent figure at the court of Thānesar and not at the *Durbar* of the Maukharis. Bāṇa, however, refers to the imprisonment of the widowed Maukhari queen at Kanauj, her liberation through the connivance of a Gupta noble, and her flight to the Vindhya forest. In the *Fang-chih* Harsha, king of Kanauj, is represented as administering the government in conjunction with his widowed sister as if she had some claim to the throne of Kanauj, which is only possible if that city formed a part of the realm of her husband. The true history of the period will only be made clear when further evidence is forthcoming. It is, however, certain that Harsha found himself at the head of the kingdom of his brother as well as that of his brother-in-law. But he contented himself at first with the modest title of *Rājaputra* (Prince) Śīlāditya.

The dynasty to which Harsha belonged claimed descent from the illustrious Pushyabhūti, a devoted worshipper of Śiva. It ruled at Thānesar and was raised to greatness by Prabhākaravardhana, father of Harsha, who was the son of a princess, possibly of "later Gupta" lineage. He took the title of *Mahārājādhirāja* and

played the part of "a lion to the Hun deer". As already related he offered the hand of his daughter Rājyaśrī to Grahavarman Maukhari and thus formed an alliance between the two most powerful families of the Madhya-deśa (upper Ganges valley) which resembled the solar and lunar races of antiquity. The vicissitudes through which the kingdom of Thānesar passed in the time of Rājyavardhana, his immediate successor, have been mentioned above. Harsha on coming to the throne had to face a sea of troubles. He had to rescue his sister, the Maukhari queen Rājyaśrī, the widow of Grahavarman, who had fled from the place of her confinement at Kanauj. He had to avenge the death of his elder brother and predecessor, and he had to consolidate his authority in the two kingdoms over which he was called upon to rule. One of his earliest acts was a treaty of alliance with Bhāskaravarman, the ambitious king of Kāmarūpa in modern Assam, who was in a position to attack his arch-enemy, the king of Gauḍa, in the rear. Another prince befriended by Harsha was Mādhava Gupta, belonging to the line of the "later Guptas" of Mālwa and Magadha. The recovery of Rājyaśrī was effected within a short time by Harsha himself, who was accompanied by Mādhava Gupta, while Bhaṇḍi was ordered to proceed against the king of Gauḍa. Harsha is said to have waged incessant warfare until in six years he had fought the 'Five Indies'. Śaśāṅka of Gauḍa proved a formidable opponent and his power seems to have continued undiminished till A.D. 619. Harsha, however, succeeded in strengthening his position in the home territories, and in 612 assumed full regal titles. He increased his army, bringing the elephant corps up to 60,000 and the cavalry to 100,000.

During the period 618–627 Chinese chroniclers record serious disturbances in India, and Śīlāditya (Harsha) is represented as punishing the kings of the four parts of the country. What specific contests are meant is not made clear either by the Chinese writers or the grants of Harsha himself issued between A.D. 628 and 631. But we learn from Chalukya records that sometime before 634 Harsha marched southwards as far as the Nerbudda, where his further progress was stopped by Pulakesin II of the Chalukya dynasty of Vātāpi in the Deccan. A record of the Gurjara chiefs of Broach refers to the defeat by Harsha of a prince of Valabhī who was granted protection by Dadda II. At the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit to Valabhī, c. 641, the reigning prince of Valabhī, Dhruvabhaṭa, was attached to Harsha's interest by a matrimonial alliance. Śaśāṅka, king of Gauḍa, must have died sometime before 637 when Hiuen Tsang was at Nālandā in South Bihār. For a time

Magadha passed under the rule of Pūrṇavarman. In 641 Śīlāditya (Harsha) himself assumed the title of king of Magadha and exchanged embassies with China. According to tradition he had led an expedition to Northern Bengal. The final overthrow of the Gauḍa kingdom of Karṇasuvarṇa seems to have been the work of his ally Bhāskaravarman whose Nidhanapur grant is issued from that city. The exact date of this event is not known. In 642 death probably removed Pulakesin II, the formidable southern rival of Harsha, and in the next year the northern emperor undertook an expedition to Gañjām. We have also references in literature to Harsha's expedition to the *Tushāra śaila* or snowy mountains, whence he exacted tribute, to Kāshmīr from which he carried off a tooth relic, and to Sind whose ruler was deprived of his royal fortune. We do not know to which period of Harsha's reign these events are to be assigned.

Much controversy has raged round the question of the extent of Harsha's empire. It certainly embraced the old kingdoms of Thānesar (in the eastern Punjab) and Kanauj (in the Gangetic Doāb) and the provinces of Ahichchhatrā (Rohilkhaṇḍ), Śrāvastī (Oudh) and Prayāga (Allahābād). Chinese evidence points to the inclusion of Magadha since 641 and also of Orissa. Udita of Jālandhar and Mādhava Gupta, apparently of Eastern Mālwa, seem to have been his vassals. The emperor's army had overrun almost the whole of Northern India, from the snowy mountains of the north to the Nerbudda in the south, and from Gañjām in the east to Valabhī in the west. The king of Kāmarūpa beyond the Brahmaputra was his ally, and the real character of the alliance was well illustrated by an episode recorded by a Chinese writer which shows that the eastern potentate acknowledged the superiority of Harsha's might and did not dare disobey his orders. Even the most powerful of Harsha's enemies, viz. the Chalukyas of the Deccan, bear witness to his suzerainty over the whole of Uttarāt patha or Northern India. The pre-eminence of Harsha over other contemporary rulers of the North is also indicated by the "music-pace-drums" which he alone was entitled to use, other kings not being permitted to adopt the paraphernalia in question. It is not suggested that the whole of Northern India was actually controlled by imperial officials. Large tracts of this wide region were doubtless under powerful local rulers who owed only a nominal allegiance to the imperial throne. But even the rulers of distant Kāshmīr, Sind, Valabhī, and Kāmarūpa had a wholesome dread of the power of Harsha. The king of Kāmarūpa dared not detain a Chinese pilgrim at his capital against the will of his mighty

"ally", and, according to one interpretation of a certain passage in the *Harsha-charita,* the Kanauj emperor actually installed Kumāra-rāja (Bhāskaravarman) on the throne. This obtains some confirmation from another passage where it is stated that the *lokapālas* or rulers in the different regions owed their appointment to him. The king of Kāshmīr was compelled to surrender a tooth relic to Harsha. The ruler of Sind, already humbled by Prabhākaravardhana, was, according to Bāṇa, shorn of his royal fortune by Harsha. The ruler of Valabhī had once fled before the advancing arms of the Kanauj monarch, and later on accepted the hand of his daughter and attended the imperial court.

Kanauj, the imperial capital, had the Ganges on its west side. It is described by Hiuen Tsang as a very strongly defended city with lofty structures everywhere. There were beautiful gardens and tanks of clear water. Rarities from strange lands were collected here. The inhabitants were well off and there were families with great wealth. The people had a refined appearance and dressed in glossy silk attire. They were given to learning and the arts.

Harsha did not long survive the Gañjām campaign of A.D. 643. In his later days he received embassies from China and maintained close diplomatic relations with the Chinese court. At this period he came into contact with Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese Master of the Law, who was visiting the sacred spots of Buddhism. It appears from the records of the Chinese pilgrim that the emperor of Kanauj showed a strong predilection for Buddhism, though he does not seem to have discarded altogether the Śaivism of his earlier years. He caused the use of animal food to cease throughout his dominions and prohibited the taking of life. He erected rest-houses and monasteries and practised charity on an extensive scale. One of the most interesting features of his reign was the quinquennial assembly known as the *Mahāmokshaparishad.*

In 643 the Chinese pilgrim witnessed two grand assemblies, one in the city of Kanauj, the other in the "arena of charitable offerings" at Prayāga (Allahābād). The Kanauj assembly was summoned "in order to exhibit the refinements of the Great Vehicle and make manifest the exceeding merit of the Chinese Master of the Law". It was attended by twenty kings, besides thousands of Buddhist, Brāhmaṇical and Jaina theologians and priests. Impressive spectacles were presented by a golden statue of the Buddha kept in a lofty tower and a gorgeous procession of elephants that escorted an image of the Śākya sage to the hall of assembly. The gathering at Prayāga included about 500,000 people who had been summoned from the distant corners of the "Five Indies" to receive

gifts from the emperor. Harsha went to the spot accompanied by the Chinese Master of the Law and the kings of twenty countries. Images of the Buddha, Ādityadeva (the Sun), and Īśvaradeva (Śiva) were installed on successive days and precious articles were distributed in charity on each occasion. When the accumulation of five years was exhausted, the emperor wore a second-hand garment and paid worship to the Buddhas of the ten regions.

Harsha died in A.D. 646 or 647. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest kings of ancient India. Called upon to rule over two distracted kingdoms in a period of turmoil he succeeded to a large extent in restoring respect for authority in vast tracts of Northern India and won praise as a just and benevolent ruler, punctilious in the discharge of his duties. It is not surprising that years of strenuous warfare did not allow him much time to establish on a firm foundation that ordered government which three generations of Gupta emperors had given to the "middle country", the benefits of which were warmly appreciated by Fa Hien. It was, however, not due to any lack of vigour on his part. This indefatigable prince was anxious to bring justice to the doors of all. He made visits of inspection throughout his dominions and was prompt to reward the virtuous and punish the evil-doer. But he nursed a higher ambition. The grandson of a "Gupta" princess, Harsha attempted to revive the imperial memories of Samudra Gupta and sought to unite the north and south of India under one sceptre —in vain as the sequel proved. But the imperial splendour of Kanauj that he did so much to augment was hardly dimmed in succeeding ages, and rulers of the remotest corners of India counted it their proudest boast to have "captured Mahodaya-Śrī", i.e. conquered Kanauj. Harsha also showed a taste for literature and the arts of peace that reminds one of the versatile hero of Harisheṇa's panegyric. In his later days he sought to emulate, perhaps unconsciously, the great Aśoka, and the Chinese pilgrim bears eloquent testimony to his pious foundations, his toleration, liberality and benevolence, all irrespective of caste and creed. One European writer calls him the Akbar of the Hindu period. A great general and a just administrator, he was even greater as a patron of religion and learning. He gathered round himself some of the finest intellects and holiest sages—men like Bāṇa, Mayūra, Divākara and Hiuen Tsang. In one respect he is more fortunate than Samudra Gupta, for we still possess some gems of literature that proceeded, according to tradition, from his pen.

The Kanauj Empire after Harsha

Harsha died either at the end of A.D. 646 or the beginning of 647. The removal of his strong personality let loose forces of disintegration and disorder in the Madhya-deśa (upper Ganges valley) that were not successfully overcome till about A.D. 836 when Bhoja I of the Pratihāra family ruled once more over a vast empire, with its capital at Mahodaya or Kanauj. After a reign extending over more than forty years Harsha transmitted his crown to successors who must have struggled to maintain their heritage for some time. Attempts were made by princes like Yaśo-varman, and possibly Indra-rāja to restore the fallen fabric of imperialism and win for Kanauj that proud position which it once occupied under Harsha. But their efforts were frustrated by the war-like potentates beyond the limits of the Madhya-deśa to whom the acquisition of the imperial seat of Harsha was the goal of political ambition. Kanauj was the cynosure of all eyes. "What Babylon was to the martial races of Western Asia, what Rome was to the Teutonic barbarians and Byzantium to the mediaeval world of Eastern and Southern Europe, that was Mahodaya-Śrī to the upspringing dynasties of the eighth and ninth centuries A.D." The history of the upper Ganges valley from the end of 646 to 836 is one of internal strife and of external invasion which ended when the royal throne of Harsha passed into the hands of the Pratihāras. When the Pratihāra authority weakened in the tenth century history repeated itself. Another period of commotion ensued followed by the rise of a new imperial family—the Gāhaḍa-vālas. Meanwhile a deluge was preparing in the wilds of Afghānis-tān which soon spread over the whole of Northern India. The power of the Gāhaḍavālas was shattered on the plains of Chandwar in 1194 and the agony of Imperial Kanauj was soon hushed in the stillness of death.

Aspirants for Imperial Dominion after Harsha

It is doubtful if Harsha left a son. He had a daughter who was given in marriage to Dhruvabhaṭa of Valabhī. It is significant that in the Gupta years 326–330, which almost synchronise with Harsha's death, Dharasena IV, son of Dhruvabhaṭa, assumed the imperial titles of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameś-vara Chakravartī*. He doubtless looked upon himself as the imperial successor in Western India of the Kanauj monarch, who may have been his maternal grandfather. Among other pretenders were a

brother of Grahavarman, and one of Harsha's ministers named Arjuna or Arunāśva. The latter seized some provinces in the Ganges valley and came into conflict with a Chinese mission headed by Wang-hiuen-tse. The Chinese envoy received assistance from Tibet and Nepāl and inflicted crushing defeats on the enemy. He also obtained large supplies of cattle and accoutrements from Kumāra (Bhāskaravarman), king of Kāmarūpa, and carried off the usurping minister to China.

In A.D. 672 the most powerful sovereign in the Madhya-deśa was Ādityasena, son of Mādhava Gupta, the ally of Harsha—the "Sun army" of Far Eastern pilgrims. Ādityasena signalised his accession to power by the performance of the horse-sacrifice. He strengthened his position by matrimonial alliances with the most illustrious families of his age. Himself a scion of the "later Gupta" dynasty of Mālwa and Magadha, he gave his daughter in marriage to Bhogavarman Maukhari. His grand-daughter, born of Bhogavarman's wife, became the queen of Śivadeva of Nepāl, and mother of Jayadeva. This Jayadeva married Rājyamatī, daughter of Harshadeva of the Bhagadatta family of Kāmarūpa.

Ādityasena was followed by three "Gupta" successors, Deva Gupta, Vishṇu Gupta, and Jīvita Gupta II. Early in the eighth century the throne of Magadha is found in the occupation of a Gauḍa king. The identification of this ruler with Jīvita Gupta II or any other "later Gupta" king is clearly untenable, for we learn from contemporary epigraphy that in the time of Īśānavarman Maukhari (middle of the sixth century A.D.) the line of the "later Guptas" is associated with Prayāga or Allahābād. On the other hand the Gauḍas are described as taking refuge in the sea. In the next century the "later Guptas" are mentioned as the rulers of Magadha, while the Gauḍas have their metropolis at Karṇasuvarṇa. A panegyrist of the later Guptas styles himself a Gauḍa, but the designation is not applied to the line of kings eulogised. The latter are simply characterised as of "good lineage". The truth seems to be that it was the westward expansion of the Gauḍa power which finally led to the extinction of the house of Ādityasena.

But the Gauḍas were not left in undisturbed possession of Magadha for any length of time. The kingdom of Kanauj revived about this time under the vigorous rule of Yaśovarman, a prince claiming descent from the Lunar race, whose exploits are described in the *Prākrit* work entitled the *Gauḍavaho* by Vākpatirāja. The career of Yaśovarman reminds one of the great Harsha. He led an expedition against the Gauḍa king and killed him in battle. Having next subjugated the Vaṅgas of Eastern and Central Bengal

he turned to the south and reached the Nerbudda. After a brief stay on the banks of that river he returned to his capital through the desert of Rājputāna and the plain of Thānesar. Like Harsha he maintained diplomatic intercourse with the Chinese empire (A.D. 731). He extended his patronage to the illustrious poets Bhavabhūti and Vākpatirāja. In the end this enterprising prince roused the hostility of Lalitāditya, king of Kāshmīr, and perished in a conflict with his mighty northern adversary.

Kāshmīr

Kāshmīr now appears on the scene as a keen competitor of the Gangetic powers. The valley had formed part of the empires of Aśoka, Kanishka and Mihiragula. In the seventh century A.D. it grew into a first-rate power under a local dynasty, styled Kārkoṭa, founded by Durlabhavardhana. The dynasty seems to have acknowledged in a vague way the political pre-eminence of China. Two grandsons of Durlabhavardhana, Chandrāpīḍa and Muktāpīḍa Lalitāditya, received investiture as king from the Chinese emperor. Lalitāditya was an ambitious prince. We have already referred to his victory over Yaśovarman of Kanauj. Kalhaṇa, the historian of Kāshmīr, credits him with having led his troops to distant countries. The account of these exploits mostly reads like the conventional panegyric of an epic hero. More importance attaches to those parts of Kalhaṇa's narrative which refer to his triumphs over Tibetans, Dards and the Turks on the Indus and the slaughter of a king of Gauḍa. Lalitāditya is justly eulogised for his pious foundations, among which the famous temple of Mārtāṇḍa stands pre-eminent.

Jayāpīḍa Vinayāditya emulated the exploits of his grandfather, Lalitāditya, by defeating the kings of Gauḍa and Kanauj. He was a great patron of learning and his court was adorned by Kshīrasvāmin, Udbhaṭa, Dāmodara Gupta, Vāmaṇa and other scholars. His fiscal exactions, however, made his name odious. His dynasty came to an end in A.D. 855 and was supplanted by the house of Utpala.

Avantivarman, the founder of the new line, is famous for his irrigation works carried out under the direction of his minister Suyya. The next king, Śaṅkaravarman, son of Avantivarman, extended the boundaries of Kāshmīr in several directions. He seems to have come into conflict with the emperor Bhoja I of Kanauj and Lalliya Shāhi of Udabhāṇḍapura or Und on the Indus, and wrested a portion of the Punjab from the Gurjaras. Like Jayāpīḍa of the previous dynasty he harassed the people by fiscal

extortions and met his end in a conflict with the people of Uraśā, the modern Hazāra district. A period of turmoil followed. The widowed queen Sugandhā attempted to rule in the name of puppet kings. But she had to encounter formidable opposition from the powerful military factions of the *Tantrins* who made themselves virtual dictators of the state. The *Tantrins* were eventually put down by certain feudal chiefs. In the end an assembly of Brāhmaṇas raised to the throne a member of their own order named Yaśaskara. The line of Yaśaskara was followed by that of Parva Gupta. In the time of Kshema Gupta, son and successor of Parva Gupta, the virtual ruler was his queen Diddā, daughter of a chief of Lohara and descended through her mother from the Shāhis of Udabhāṇḍapura. Diddā, at first, ruled in the name of puppet kings and then seized the crown herself. She kept it till A.D. 1003 when she transmitted her sceptre to her nephew Saṃgrāmarāja, the founder of the Lohara dynasty. A terrible invader now appeared on the scene. The Shāhi kingdom of Udabhāṇḍapura fell after a heroic struggle, in spite of the assistance it received from the ruler of Kāshmīr. The kingdom of Saṃgrāmarāja fortunately escaped destruction at the hands of Mahmud of Ghaznī, but it was too much weakened by internal conflicts to interfere successfully in the general affairs of Northern India. It gradually sank to the position of a minor power and finally succumbed to the Muslims in A.D. 1339.

Bengal and the Pāla Empire

Both under Lalitāditya and Vinayāditya Kāshmīr had come into conflict with the arms of Gauḍa, which was the name applied to a people of Western and North-Western Bengal as well as to their country. In the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. this eastern kingdom definitely entered on the scene as a rival of Kanauj and Kāshmīr. References to Gauḍa occur in early literature, notably in the *sūtras* of Pāṇini, the *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra* and some of the Purāṇas. The sister realm of Vaṅga or Eastern and Central Bengal does not seem to be less ancient as it is referred to in the *Dharmasūtras* and the epic. In the days of Maurya and Gupta ascendancy Bengal seems to have formed part of the empire of Magadha, the eastern districts enjoying a certain amount of autonomy. After the fall of the Imperial Guptas we find several local rulers, notably Dharmāditya, Gopachandra and Samāchāradeva, asserting their independence. Gopachandra was a powerful ruler whose dominions embraced large tracts in both Eastern and Western Bengal. In his days, or those of his immediate successors, the

Gauḍa people emerge as a great military power. Sometime before A.D. 554 they came into conflict with Īśānavarman Maukhari and found a safe refuge in a maritime region. In the next century we find them in possession of the aggressive kingdom of Karṇasuvarṇa (usually placed in the Murshidabad district). Under the leadership of their king Śaśāṅka they waged war on the aspiring house of Pushyabhūti. The murder of Rājyavardhana and the war of revenge undertaken by his brother and successor Harsha have been mentioned above. Till 619 the power of the Gauḍa king seems to have remained unshaken, and his suzerainty was acknowledged as far south as Gañjām. But sometime between 619 and 637 Śaśāṅka seems to have died and some years later we find the capital city in the possession of Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa, the eastern ally of Harsha. In the latter half of the seventh century eastern India seems, according to some scholars, to have been shared between the "later Guptas" of Magadha and the Khaḍga dynasty



COIN ATTRIBUTED TO SAMĀCHĀRADEVA

of Eastern Bengal. The Khaḍga chronology is, however, still uncertain. Early in the eighth century both Western and Eastern Bengal were overrun by Yaśovarman of Kanauj. Other conquerors followed in his wake. There was anarchy (*Mātsya nyāya*) in the realm till at last the different sections of the people (*prakṛitis*) raised to the throne a chief named Gopāla, who brought the blessings of peace to the distracted lands.

With Gopāla began the famous Pāla dynasty which, in the last days of its rule, claimed descent from the solar race and also from the sea. Under Pāla rule Bengal was to enjoy a period of prosperity undreamt of in her early annals. In contemporary records the earliest kings of the line are called *Vaṅgapati* and *Gauḍeśvara*, showing that they ruled over the twin kingdoms of Eastern and Western Bengal.

Dharmapāla, son of Gopāla, was one of the greatest kings that ever ruled in Bengal. His accession to the throne probably took place between A.D. 752 and 794. In the course of a long reign of at least thirty-two years he raised Bengal to the position of the

premier state in Northern India, and did much to restore the greatness of the old imperial city of Pāṭaliputra. He doubtless attempted to shift the political centre of gravity once more to the east, the home territory of the Imperial Mauryas and the great Guptas. He defeated Indrarāja and other enemies, conquered Kanauj and, with the assent of the neighbouring powers, placed on the throne his *protégé* Chakrāyudha. Some records describe him as the conqueror of the whole country from the Himālayas in the north to Gokarṇa in the south. But his successes in the Gangetic Doāb were short-lived. The Rāshṭrakūṭas of the Deccan claim to have expelled the Gauḍa king from the territory between the Ganges and the Jumnā during the period A.D. 772 to 794, while the Pratihāras of Western India under Nāgabhaṭa II drove away Chakrāyudha, the vassal king of Kanauj, and made themselves masters of the imperial seat of Harsha certainly before A.D. 836 and probably before even 833.

The death of Dharmapāla probably took place sometime after A.D. 794 but before A.D. 839. His son and successor Devapāla was equally ambitious. He renewed the struggle with the Gurjaras or the Pratihāras of the west and the Dravidians of the south, and his troops claimed victories not only over the neighbouring realms of Orissa and Assam but also over the Huns, a people whom it was the policy of every aspirant for imperial dominion in Northern India to try to overcome. His court poet credits him with having enjoyed the whole earth from the Himālayas to Adam's Bridge. A more modest claim is put forward in other epigraphic passages which say that his arms reached the Kamboja territory in the north and the Vindhya hills in the south. That he maintained some sort of relations with the north-west borderland of India appears probable from his connection with Vīradeva, a Brāhmaṇa from Nagarahāra or Jalalābād, who got the important post of abbot of Nālandā in South Bihār. He also received an embassy from Bālaputradeva, ruler of Suvarṇadvīpa or Sumatra (p. 219). He seems to have preferred Monghyr to Pāṭaliputra as the seat of his "camp of victory". He died between A.D. 833 and 878 after a reign of at least thirty-nine years, having raised the kingdom of Bengal to a pinnacle of glory that was never again attained in the time of his successors.

After Devapāla the Pāla power seems to have declined. The next king Vigrahapāla I, nephew of Devapāla, was a weak ruler given to religious activities who finally abdicated in favour of his son Nārāyaṇapāla. The "camp of victory" at Monghyr was still in existence in the seventeenth year of Nārāyaṇapāla, which must

be assigned to a period subsequent to A.D. 852 but before A.D. 898 at the latest (the fifth year of Mahendrapāla Pratihāra). After this the famous fort does not find any mention in any Pāla record. A Pratihāra record of 837 tells us that a chieftain named Kakka gained renown by fighting with the Gauḍas at Monghyr. It is not improbable that Pāṭaliputra had already fallen before the advancing arms of the Pratihāras and the turn of Monghyr came next. Within a short time, sometime before the fifth year of Mahendrapāla, that is not later than A.D. 898, even Northern Bengal was annexed to the Pratihāra empire. Part of the lost ground seems to have been recovered in the latter part of Nārāyaṇapāla's reign, which extended over more than half a century (at least fifty-four years). Two or three generations later, in the time of Gopāla II or of Vigrahapāla II, the Pāla power was once more shaken, possibly by the Kambojas, but the fortunes of the family were restored by Mahīpāla I. Mahīpāla is known to have been ruling in the first quarter of the eleventh century A.D.

Mahīpāla I is referred to as the overlord of Gauḍa in a record of A.D. 1026. Parts of Bengal had fallen into the hands of local dynasties which may in some cases have acknowledged in a vague way the suzerainty of the Pāla emperor (*adhipa*). Two of the local families, namely, the Śūras of South-West Bengal and the Chandras of Eastern Bengal, deserve special mention. Several Śūra princes find mention in literature and inscriptions. The most notable among them is Ādiśūra, a name famous in Bengali legend. In the absence of contemporary records it is difficult to say if he can be regarded as an historical figure.

In or about A.D. 1023 the princes of Bengal had to bear the brunt of an attack from Rājendra Chola I, the ambitious ruler of the Tamil country in the far south of India. The army of Rājendra claims to have measured swords with Ranaśūra of South-West Bengal and Govindachandra of the eastern part of the province. He is also credited with having won a victory over Mahīpāla. Another invader of Mahīpāla's dominions was in the opinion of some scholars the famous Gāngeyadeva Kalachuri, but this view rests on an identification which may be doubted.

After Mahīpāla came his son Nayapāla and grandson Vigrahapāla III. Both these personages came into conflict with Karṇa Kalachuri, the great king of the Chedi country in Central India. Vigraha III married Yauvanaśrī, daughter of the Chedi king. Another queen of this monarch was of Rāshṭrakūṭa lineage. He left three sons, Mahīpāla II, Surapāla, and Rāmapāla. Mahīpāla II proved to be a weak king. The Pāla empire now depended in large measure

on the support of a military aristocracy recruited in part from other provinces. A confederacy of indigenous chieftains revolted against the king. Divvoka, a Kaivarta, held sway in North Bengal which was temporarily lost to the Pālas. Sometime after Divvoka his nephew Bhīma became king. The latter was overthrown by Rāmapāla, the youngest brother of Mahīpāla II, mainly with the help of his Rāshṭrakūṭa relations. The new king once more restored the fortunes of his family. Rāmapāla was followed by his son Kumārapāla, a grandson, Gopāla III, and a second son Madanapāla. In the end Pāla supremacy in Bengal was destroyed by Vijayasena, who belonged to a family that came from the Kanarese country



ATĪSA
(*Reproduced from L. A. Waddell's "Buddhism of Tibet". Heffer*)

in the Deccan. The Sena power was firmly established in almost the whole of Bengal by the middle of the twelfth century A.D.

The Pāla dynasty produced the last great Hindu emperor whose commands were issued from the historic city of Pāṭaliputra. Like the Mauryas and the Guptas, the Pāla sovereigns raised a kingdom in Eastern India to a position of pre-eminence in *Āryāvarta*. Like their illustrious predecessors they maintained relations with the distant potentates of the world as known to them, and not only did much to foster religion and culture in India but encouraged their spread to foreign lands. The Pāla period saw the foundation of the Universities of Uddaṇḍapura and Vikramaśilā. The epoch was rendered memorable by the activities of artists like Dhīmāna and Vītapāla, of missionaries like Pandit Dharmapāla and Atīsa Dīpaṅkara and scholars like Chakrapāṇi and Sandhyākara.

Themselves devoted worshippers of Buddha, the Pāla monarchs were catholic enough to grant toleration to the votaries of Nārāyaṇa and Mahādeva. Throughout the Pāla period the king sought the assistance of Brāhmaṇa ministers. The rise of Kaivarta chiefs to positions of power and wealth in the latter days of the dynasty shows that careers were open to men of talent irrespective of caste and creed.

The Pratihāra Empire

The Pālas were one of the most long-lived dynasties of Indian history, but their supremacy in the Gangetic Doāb was of short duration. The sceptre of Kanauj was not long wielded by the vassals of Dharmapāla, and by A.D. 836 the Pratihāra dynasty was firmly established in the city of Mahodaya (Kanauj). Before the end of the ninth century the power of this new imperial line had extended in all directions and the command of the great Pratihāra king was obeyed all over the wide expanse of territory stretching from Pehoa in the Punjab to Deogarh in Central India, and from Una in Kāṭhiāwār to Pāhārpur in North Bengal.

In their epigraphic records the Pratihāras claim descent from the Kshatriya Lakshmaṇa (brother of Rāma) of the solar race famed in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and also from a Brāhmaṇa named Harichandra. The prevailing view among modern scholars is that they are a branch of the Gurjara race that began to play an important part in Indian history from the sixth century A.D. The Gurjaras established principalities in the Punjab, Marwar and Broach. In the seventh century A.D. they find mention in the *Harsha-charita* of Bāṇa, the records of Hiuen Tsang and the Aihole inscription of Pulakeśin II. About the middle of the eighth century A.D. certain Gurjara chiefs are represented as serving a Rāshṭrakūṭa monarch as Pratihāra (door-keeper) at a sacrifice performed at Ujjain. The designation Pratihāra probably originated in this way, though a later tradition connects it with Lakshmaṇa, brother of Rāmā, who guarded the doors of the latter during the years of his exile. The connection of the Pratihāra family of Kanauj with Avanti, the district round Ujjain, at some stage in the progress of their power does not seem to be improbable in view of the alleged statement of the Jaina *Harivaṁśa* that Vatsarāja, a distinguished member of the line, was a ruler of Avanti. A different interpretation of the passage in question is, however, suggested by some scholars. The founder of Vatsarāja's family was Nāgabhaṭa I who is usually assigned to the middle of the eighth century A.D. He did much to rehabilitate the power of the Gurjaras which was threatened by

the Arabs from Sind and the Chalukyas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas from the Deccan. Vatsarāja, grand-nephew of Nāgabhaṭa I, claims to have won the position of *Samrāj*, or emperor, and extended his conquests as far as Bengal, but he was driven to the trackless wilderness by the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Dhruva of the Deccan. His son Nāgabhaṭa II won some successes at first. He is credited with having extended his influence from Sind in the north to the Andhra country in the south, from Ānartta in Kāṭhiāwār in the west to the borders of Bengal in the east. His most notable achievement was the defeat of Dharmapāla, king of Bengal, and the expulsion of his *protégé* Chakrāyudha from Kanauj. But he himself sustained defeats at the hands of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, the sworn enemies of his line, who had grown very powerful under the vigorous rule of Govinda III.

The Pratihāra power recovered under Bhoja I, grandson of Nāgabhaṭa II, who was firmly enthroned at Kanauj in A.D. 836. He extended his power northwards as far as Pehoa and southwards as far as the Vindhyas, but his further progress was stopped by Śaṅkaravarman of Kāshmīr and Dhruva Dhārāvarsha, a Rāshṭrakūṭa chieftain of Broach. He was more successful in the east. The Gauḍas (of Bengal) were defeated and the Pratihāra empire in the time of his successor stretched as far as Pāhārpur in North Bengal. The empire of Bhoja was visited by the merchant Sulaimān who spoke highly of the strength of his cavalry and of the peace that reigned in his kingdom.

Mahendrapāla I, son of Bhoja, maintained his father's empire and seems to have extended it towards the east. He imitated Harsha and Yaśovarman in encouraging learning. His court was adorned by the poet Rājaśekhara.

Mahendra was followed by his sons Mahīpāla, Bhoja II and Vināyakapāla. Some scholars prefer to identify Mahīpāla Pratihāra with Vināyakapāla, but their dates do not overlap. Mahīpāla maintained his hold on Surāshṭra or Kāṭhiāwār as late as 914 A.D. In the next year Al Masūdī visited his realm and spoke about his horses and camels. In 917 the Pratihāra king was still in possession of the Gangetic Doāb. Rājaśekhara speaks about his conquests in the most distant regions of India from Kulūta in the north to Kerala in the south. His power was threatened by Indra III, the Rāshṭrakūṭa king of the Deccan, who inflicted a severe defeat on him and took Kanauj. Mahīpāla seems to have been restored by a Chandella king. The dramatist Kshemiśvara asserts in his *Chaṇḍakauśika*, which he wrote for the Pratihāra king, his patron's triumph over the Karṇātas, i.e. the Rāshṭrakūṭas. But the Pratihāra empire does

not seem to have fully recovered from the blow it received at the hands of the latter.

The succeeding rulers maintained a precarious hold over the upper Ganges valley, parts of Rājputāna and Mālwa, but their former feudatories, notably the Chandellas, aggrandised themselves at their cost. The Chaulukyas made themselves independent in Gujarāt, the Paramāras in Mālwa, the Chandellas and Chedis in the country between the Jumnā and the Nerbudda. A still more formidable enemy appeared on the scene early in the eleventh century A.D. In 1018 Kanauj, then ruled by Rājyapāla Pratihāra, was taken by Mahmūd of Ghaznī. The Pratihāra dynasty probably continued to rule over a small territory till the second quarter of the eleventh century A.D. But their empire was gone and they sank to the position of local chieftains.

The Pratihāras in the days of their greatness had defended Hindustān against the Arab invaders, who had often the assistance of the Rāshṭrakūṭas of the south. Towards the end of the tenth century the task of defending the North-West Frontier of India devolved on their feudatories, the Hindu Shāhis of Udabhāṇḍapura. Mention has already been made of this illustrious line of kings in connection with the history of Kāshmīr. The founder of the line was a prince named Lalliya Shāhi who flourished towards the close of the ninth century A.D. The fourth prince, Bhīma Shāhi, was the maternal grandfather of the celebrated queen Diddā of Kāshmīr. His famous successor Jayapāla came into conflict with the Sultans of Ghaznī. The struggle produced momentous consequences and its history will be narrated in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER XII

THE DECCAN FROM THE FALL OF THE SĀTAVĀHANAS TO THE END OF RĀSHṬRAKŪṬA SUPREMACY—RISE OF THE EMPIRES OF KĀÑCHĪ AND KARṆĀṬA

Successors of the Sātavāhanas

GAUTAMĪPUTRA ŚRĪ YAJÑA ŚĀTAKARṆI, who probably ruled towards the close of the second century A.D., was the last great king of his house. After his death, the Sātavāhana empire began to fall to pieces. The Nāsik region in Mahārāshṭra seems to have been lost to the Ābhīra king Īśvarasena. The Vākāṭakas rose to power in Berar and some adjoining tracts. The Western Kanarese districts fell into the hands of a line of Śātakarṇis who received the epithet of Chutukulānanda and are sometimes referred to as Chuṭu-Śātakarṇis to distinguish them from the Sātavāhana Śātakarṇis of the Imperial line. They had their capital at the famous city of Vaijayantīpura or Banavāsi in north Kanara. The old imperial line continued to rule for some time longer in the Andhra country at the mouth of the Kṛishṇā till they were supplanted by the Ikshvākus, the rulers belonging to the Ananda *gotra*, the Bṛihat phalāyanas, and the Śālaṅkāyanas. The latter were succeeded by the Vishṇukuṇḍins. The Śālaṅkāyanas already ruled as petty chieftains as early as the second century A.D. They must have asserted their independence shortly after the fall of the Imperial Sātavāhanas. They came into conflict with the northern emperor Samudra Gupta in the fourth century A.D. Meanwhile another power had arisen in the far south of India with its capital at Kāñchī, modern Conjeeveram near Madras, but exercising control over some of the Kanarese districts and the southern part of the Andhra country at the mouth of the river Kṛishṇā. This was the Pallava power. At the time of the famous raid of Samudra Gupta, the most important dynasties in trans-Vindhyan India were the Vākāṭakas of the Upper Deccan and the Pallavas of Kāñchī. The Gupta conqueror does not appear to have come into direct contact with the Vākāṭakas. He vanquished, however, a chief named Vyāghrarāja, who may have been identical with a Vākāṭaka feudatory named Vyāghradeva. Chandra Gupta II, the son and

successor of Samudra Gupta, on the other hand, established direct relations with his Vākāṭaka neighbours and gave his daughter Prabhāvatī in marriage to their king Rudrasena II. The Vākāṭakas in their turn were linked by matrimonial alliances with several dynasties beyond the Godāvarī. The descendants of Rudrasena II and Prabhāvatī continued to rule in the Deccan for several generations till the rise of the Vishṇukuṇḍins and their rivals and contemporaries, the Chalukyas of Vātāpi and the Kaṭachchuris or Kalachuris of Nāsik and Mālwa.

The Great Pallavas

To the south of the Vākāṭakas lay the realm of the Pallavas of Kāñchī, one of whose early kings, Vishṇugopa, was captured and then liberated by Samudra Gupta about the middle of the fourth century A.D. The name Vishṇugopa was borne by several members of the Pallava dynasty, and it is not known in what relationship the contemporary of Samudra Gupta stood to the famous Śivaskandavarman who is mentioned in the early Prākrit records of the family as a "righteous king of great kings" and the performer of the horse-sacrifice. Inscriptions mention the names of several later Pallava monarchs whose dominions embraced not only Kāñchī but considerable parts of the Telugu and Kanarese districts. The suzerainty of some of them was acknowledged by the early Gangas of eastern and southern Mysore and the early Kadambas who supplanted the Chutu-Śātakarṇis of Vaijayantī. We learn from the *Lokavibhāga* that one of the Pallava kings who bore the name of Siṁhavarman ascended the throne in A.D. 436.

The history of the family becomes more definite from the time of Siṁhavishṇu, who must have come to the throne in the latter half of the sixth century A.D. This king is credited with having seized the country of the Cholas and vanquished all his southern neighbours, including the ruler of Ceylon. The conquest of Ceylon is also mentioned as an achievement of his grandson Narasiṁhavarman. Siṁhavishṇu was a Vaishṇava, and magnificent reliefs representing the king and two of his consorts have been discovered in the Varāha cave at Māmallapuram.

The successor of Siṁhavishṇu was his son, Mahendravarman I, whose reign saw the beginning of the great struggle between the Pallavas and their northern enemies the Chalukyas of Vātāpi for the mastery of Southern India. The struggle was continued for several generations. The Chalukya king, Pulakeśin II, is said to have caused the splendour of the Pallava lords to be obscured

by the dust of his army and to vanish behind the walls of Kāñchīpura. On the other hand, Narasiṁhavarman I, son and successor of Mahendravarman, is said to have vanquished Pulakeśin in many battles and stormed his capital, Vātāpi. The struggle was renewed by Vikramāditya I, son of Pulakeśin II, who claims to have caused the destruction of the family of Narasiṁha and captured the city of Kāñchī. The Pallava records, however, inform us that the Chalukya attack was finally repulsed. Undaunted by their failures, the Chalukyas once more overran the Pallava dominions under the leadership of Vikramāditya II, great-grandson of Vikramāditya I,



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RATHAS AT MĀMALLAPURAM

in the first half of the eighth century A.D. They routed King Nandivarman Pallavamalla and took the city of Kāñchī. The Pallavas were now threatened by enemies from the south as well as the north. The Pāṇḍyas advanced up to the banks of the Kāverī and engaged in deadly conflicts with the decadent empire of Kāñchī. The *coup de grâce* was given by Āditya Chola who defeated Aparājita Pallava and took possession of his kingdom towards the end of the ninth century A.D.

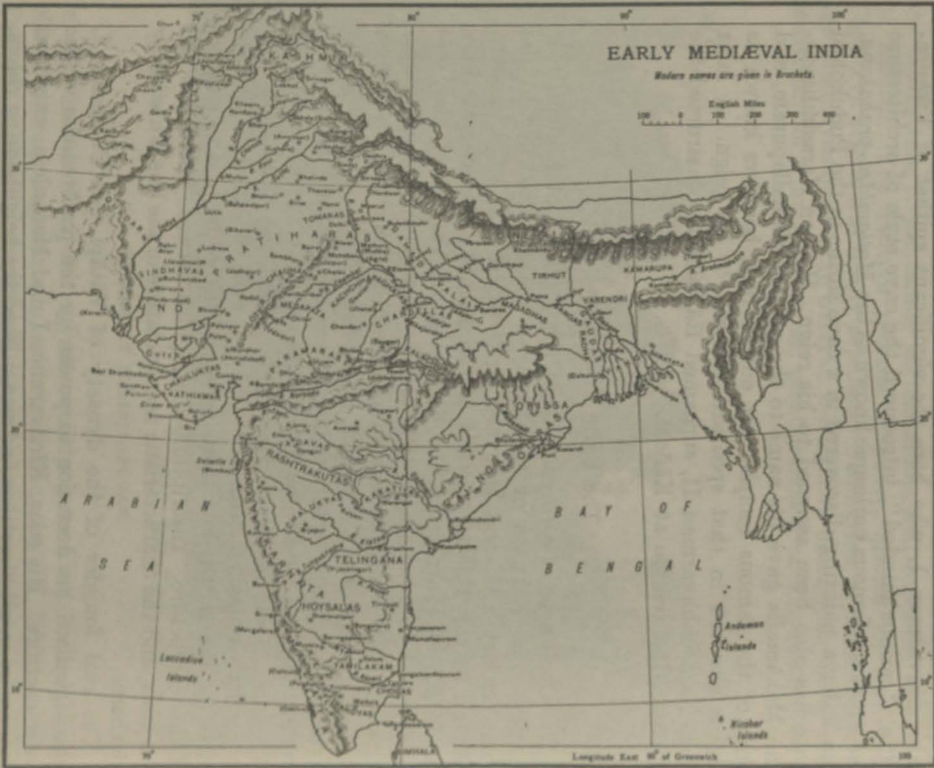
The epoch of the Pallavas of Kāñchī is memorable in the political

and cultural history of India. They built up the first great empire south of the Penner and the Tuṅgabhadrā, and carried their arms as far as Ceylon. Many of the Vaishṇava Ālvārs and the Śaiva Nāyanārs (saints) flourished during their rule. Under them Kāñchī became a great centre of Brāhmaṇical as well as Buddhist learning. Mahendravarman I, who bore the significant epithet of *Vichitra-chitta*, "curious-minded", introduced the cave style of architecture and wrote the famous burlesque known as the *Mattavilāsa-prahasana*. The Pallava painting discovered in a cave shrine in the Pudukottai State has also been assigned to his reign. His son Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla gave his name to the port of Māmallapuram, and some of the famous temples cut out of rock boulders known as *Rathas* situated in that spot are ascribed to his reign. A later king, Narasiṁhavarman II, surnamed Rājasiṁha, constructed the Kailāsanatha temple at Kāñchī.

The Early Chalukyas

The Chalukyas, sworn enemies of the Pallavas of Kāñchī, rose to power in Karṇāṭa or the Kanarese-speaking country in the sixth century A.D., and had their first capital at Vātāpi, modern Bādāmi in the Bijāpur district of the Bombay Presidency. Like the Chuṭu-Śātakarṇis and the Kadambas of Vaijayantī, they are represented as belonging to the Mānavya *gotra* and being Harītīputras. In later times they claimed descent from the lunar race. Certain inscriptions of a branch of the family refer their origin to Ayodhyā, and one tradition connects the dynastic name with Brahmadeva's *Chuluka* or hand hollowed out for the reception of water. Some modern writers believe that the Chalukyas were in reality connected with the Chāpas and the foreign Gurjara tribes of the north, but there is very little to be said in support of this conjecture. Inscriptions distinguish between Chalukyas and Gurjaras, and the characteristic nomenclature of the line is distinctly southern.

The real founder of the dynasty of Vātāpi was Pulakeśin I, who signalised his accession to power by the performance of the horse-sacrifice. His sons, Kīrtivarman I and Maṅgaleśa, extended the empire in all directions and vanquished the neighbouring rulers, including the Mauryas of the Konkan, the Kadambas of Vaijayantī and the Kalachuris of northern Mahārāshṭra and Mālwa. The Kadamba capital was finally reduced by Pulakeśin II, son of Kīrtivarman, the most famous king of the line. In the course of a long reign extending from about A.D. 609 to 642, Pulakeśin II


EARLY MEDIÆVAL INDIA
Modern names are given in Brackets
English Miles
100 0 100 200 300 400
KASHMIR
TOMARAS
PRATIHARAS
SINDHAVAS
SIND
Cutch
CHAULUKYAS
KATHIAWAR
MEDAPATA
CHANDELLAS
TIRHUT
KAMARUPA
VARENDRI
GAUDAS
RADHA
ORISSA
KALINGAS
RASHTRAKUTAS
TELINGANA
HOYSALAS
TAMILAKAM
CHOLAS
SINHALA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
Laccadive Islands
Andaman Islands
Nicobar Islands
Longitude East 90° of Greenwich

not only consolidated his authority in Mahārāshṭra but conquered nearly the whole of the Deccan from the banks of the Narmadā to the region beyond the Kāverī, thus reviving the memory of the glorious days of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi. He repulsed an attack by Harsha of Kanauj and claims to have humbled the pride of Mahendravarman I of Kāñchī. He annexed Vengī, in the Godāvarī district, the government of which was entrusted to his younger brother, Kubja Vishṇuvardhana. Hiuen Tsang visited his kingdom about A.D. 641, being favourably impressed by the king and the stern, vindictive character of the people. According to some authorities, he interchanged letters and presents with the king of Persia, but the matter is not free from doubt. The last days of the king were not happy. The Pallava king Narasiṁhavarman I, son and successor of Mahendravarman I, retrieved the disasters of his father's reign, inflicting crushing defeat on Pulakeśin and destroying his capital, Vātāpi.

The Chālukya power was revived by Vikramāditya I, son of Pulakeśin II, who renewed the struggle against the southern powers. His exploits were emulated and even surpassed by his great-grandson, Vikramāditya II who apparently stormed the Pallava capital. A feudatory Chālukya chieftain, belonging to a younger branch of the royal line stationed in South Gujarāt, distinguished himself in a struggle with the foreign Tājikas (Arabs) who invaded [illegible] of India. In or about 757 the son and successor of Vikramāditya II was overthrown by a chief named Dantidurga who laid the foundation of the next great empire of the Deccan and Mahārāshṭra—that of the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

The Great Pallavas

The Pallavas, [illegible] dominated from Kāñchī (Conjeeveram) a large part of the south, [illegible] [illegible]

not only consolidated his authority in Mahārāshṭra but overran nearly the whole of the Deccan from the banks of the Nerbudda to the region beyond the Kāverī, thus reviving the memory of the glorious days of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi. He repulsed an attack by Harsha of Kanauj and claims to have humbled the pride of Mahendravarman of Kāñchī. He annexed Pishṭapura in the Godāvarī district, the government of which was entrusted to his younger brother, Kubja Vishṇuvardhana. Hiuen Tsang, who visited his kingdom about A.D. 641, bears testimony to the fear inspired by the king and the stern vindictive character of his people. According to some authorities, he interchanged letters and presents with the king of Persia, but the matter is not free from doubt. The last days of the king were not happy. The Pallava king, Narasiṁhavarman I, son and successor of Mahendravarman I, retrieved the disasters of his father's reign, inflicting crushing defeats on Pulakeśin and destroying his capital, Vātāpi.

The Chalukya power was revived by Vikramāditya I, son of Pulakeśin II, who renewed the struggle against his southern enemies. His exploits were emulated and even surpassed by his great-grandson, Vikramāditya II, who actually entered the Pallava capital. A feudatory Chalukya chieftain, belonging to a junior branch of the royal line stationed in South Gujarāt, distinguished himself in a struggle with the formidable Tājikas, who are identified with the Arabs of Sind. In or about 753, the son and successor of Vikramāditya II was overthrown by a chief named Dantidurga who laid the foundation of the next great empire of Karṇāṭa and Mahārāshṭra, that of the Rāshṭrakūṭas.

The Great Rāshṭrakūṭas

The Rāshṭrakūṭas in their later records claim descent from Sātyaki, a Yādava chief of the north, a close associate of Krishṇa, famed in epic tradition. Some scholars connect them with the Telugu Reḍḍis. Others regard them as the main branch of a race of *Kshatriyas* who gave their name to the country of Mahārāshṭra and already figured as rulers in the days of Aśoka. Another theory traces their origin to hereditary officials in charge of *Rāshṭras* or provinces. In several Chalukya records of the eastern Deccan, Rāshṭrakūṭas are often referred to as *Kuṭumbins* or agriculturists in the Andhra country. They are also connected with the Kanarese region, and their own records speak of them as hereditary chiefs of Laṭṭalur, identified with Latur in the Nizām's dominions. It is not improbable that the Rāshṭrakūṭas were originally Dravidian

agriculturists who obtained hereditary governorships of provinces under the Chalukyas, and then established an empire, as the Marātha Deshmukhs, who served under the Muslim Sultāns of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur, did in a later age.

The Rāshṭrakūṭas established an empire which in the days of its greatness extended from South Gujarāt, Mālwa and Bāghelkhand in the north to Tanjore in the south. Their predecessors, the Chalukyas, had simply repulsed an attack of an emperor of Kanauj. The Rāshṭrakūṭas, on the other hand, penetrated into the Gangetic Doāb and claim to have stormed the imperial seat of Mahīpāla Pratihāra,—the grandson of Bhoja I of Kanauj. In the Eastern Deccan, however, their dominions did not include the whole of the district at the mouths of the Godāvarī and the Kṛishṇā. The latter continued to be ruled by a junior branch of the Chalukya family. The pre-eminence of the Rāshṭrakūṭas among the rulers of the age is testified to by Arab writers who refer to the *Balhara* (*Vallabharāja*) or beloved prince of Mankir, i.e. the Rāshṭrakūṭa monarch of Mānyakheṭa or Malkheḍ, as one of the four great sovereigns of the world, entitled to rank with the sovereign of China, the Caliph of Bagdad and the emperor of Constantinople.

The Rāshṭrakūṭas were patrons of learning, and one king, Amoghavarsha I, was an author of repute. They were also great builders, and their second king, Kṛishṇa I, uncle of Dantidurga, executed the famous Kailāsa temple at Ellora. The chief interest of Rāshṭrakūṭa history in the days of Kṛishṇa I's successors centres round the struggle with the Pratihāras of Kanauj, as that of the Chalukyas of Vātāpi centred round the conflict with the Pallavas of Kāñchī. Dhruva, younger son of Kṛishṇa I, defeated Vatsarāja Pratihāra and expelled a Gauḍa king, probably Dharmapāla, from the Gangetic Doāb. Under Govinda III, son and successor of Dhruva, the Rāshṭrakūṭas verily became invincible. They exacted tribute from the Pallavas of Kāñchī and installed one of their princes on the throne of South Gujarāt. Nāgabhaṭa II, son of Vatsarāja, sustained defeats at their hands. Dharmapāla of Bengal and his vassal, Chakrāyudha, are said to have offered their submission. The next king, Amoghavarsha I, had a very long reign (about A.D. 815–877). He removed his capital to Mānyakheṭa or Malkhed in the Nizām's dominions. He could not successfully emulate his father's exploits in the far north as he was involved in a struggle with the Chalukyas of Vengī at the mouths of the Godāvarī and the Kṛishṇā. But the Rāshṭrakūṭas in his time succeeded in checking the southern progress of Bhoja I of Kanauj. He also attached the more important rulers of the far south to the

Rāshṭrakūṭa interest by marriage alliances. Indra III, great-grandson of Amoghavarsha I, finished the work of his illustrious ancestors, Dhruva and Govinda III, by inflicting a crushing defeat on Mahīpāla, the Pratihāra king of Kanauj, and taking temporary possession of his capital city. His nephew, Kṛishṇa III, was the last great king of the line. His dominions extended from Jura in Bāghelkhand to Tanjore in the Kāverī valley. In 973, the Rāshṭrakūṭa dynasty was overthrown by Taila II, a feudatory of Kṛishṇa III, who claimed descent from the early Chalukyas of Vātāpi.

The Later Chalukyas

Taila was the founder of the Chalukya dynasty of Kalyāṇa or Kalyāṇi in the Nizām's dominions. His successors became involved in a contest with the Cholas of Tanjore, descendants of king Āditya who had crushed the Pallava king Aparājita. The Cholas now fast rose to power under Rājarāja and his son, Rājendra Chola I. While the Cholas and Chalukyas were engaged in bitter feuds in the south, thrones and dynasties in Northern India were falling before the onslaught of the famous *Hammīra*, Sultan Mahmūd of Ghaznī or Ghazna. The banner of Islam was unfurled in the Land of the Five Rivers and the Valley of the Twin Rivers, the Upper Ganges and the Jumnā. The arms of the Ghaznavid invader penetrated into the interior of Kāṭhiāwār and reached the temple of Somnāth. Indian history enters on a new epoch.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PASSING OF THE OLD HINDU KINGDOMS

The Coming of the Arabs

In the western part of Asia lies a vast country called Arabia, a land of rocks and deserts with a few oases and fertile valleys, thinly peopled by a hardy and sturdy folk. In this country, at a short distance from the western sea coast, stands the holy city of Mecca—where sometime in the year 570 was born the great Prophet, the founder of a religion that preached the unity of God, and roused the people to energy and unbounded enthusiasm. Under the successors of the Prophet, called Khalifas or Caliphs, who led the Faithful from A.D. 632, the arms of the Moslems advanced in all directions, and the banner of Islam floated over many countries from Irān to Spain. From the beginning the Arabs had their eyes on the rich ports of Western India and the outlying parts of the north-west borderland. As early as the time of the great Pulakeśin II, an army was sent to Thana near Bombay (c. A.D. 637). This was followed by expeditions to Broach, the Gulf of Debal (in Sind), and Al-Kikan (the district round Kelāt). About the middle of the seventh century, the satrapy of Zaranj in Southern Afghānistān fell into the hands of the Arabs. The turn of Makrān in Baluchistān came next. The Arabs now made repeated onslaughts on the Shāh of Kābul, supposed to be a descendant of the great Kanishka, and the *Ratbil* of Zābul in the upper valley of the Helmund river and some adjoining districts. The latter succumbed after a brave struggle (A.D. 870). The Turkī Shāhīya kings of Kābul maintained a precarious existence till the closing years of the ninth century when they were supplanted by Kallār, usually identified with Lalliya, the founder of the Hindu Shāhīya dynasty of Udabhāṇḍa-pura (Waihand, Ohind or Und on the Indus).

Meanwhile, the Arabs had followed up their success in Baluchistān by the conquest of Sind. That province figures in the narrative of Bāṇa as one of the territories overrun by Prabhākaravardhana and his more famous son, Harsha. In the days of Hiuen Tsang the throne was occupied by a Śūdra dynasty which gave way to

a Brāhmaṇa family founded by Chach. Dāhar or Dāhir, son of Chach, was on the throne when al-Hajjaj, governor of Irāk, incensed at the action of certain pirates of Debal, sent several expeditions to Sind. The earlier incursions were repulsed by Dāhir. Thereupon al-Hajjaj entrusted the work of punishing the Indian king to his nephew and son-in-law, Muhammad ibn-Kāsīm. The young commander stormed Debal, captured Nerun and some other cities and strongholds, and pushed on to the western bank of the Indus. His work was greatly facilitated by the treachery of certain Buddhist priests and renegade chiefs who deserted their sovereign and joined the invader. With the assistance of some of these traitors, Muhammad crossed the vast sheet of water separating his army from that of Dāhir and gave battle to the Indian ruler near Raor (A.D. 712). Dāhir offered a brave resistance, but was defeated and killed. The fort of Raor fell next after a heroic defence by the widowed queen. The invaders now pushed on to Bahmanābād and Alor, which submitted. The turn of Multān came next. The whole of the lower Indus valley was now dominated by the Arabs. But the invaders had no mind to stop there. Already in the time of Muhammad ibn-Kāsīm minor operations were carried on in the neighbouring provinces. A later governor, Junaid or Junayd, pursued a more aggressive policy and sent expeditions against Marmad (Marwar ?), al-Mandal (Mandor ? near Viramgam ?), Dahnaj, Barwas (Broach), Ujjain, Malibah (Mālwa), Baharimad, al-Bailaman (Vallamaṇḍala ?) and al-Jurz (Gurjara). According to Indian inscriptions, the territories overrun by the invaders included Sind, Cutch, Surāshṭra or Kāṭhiāwār, Chavoṭaka (some Chāpa principality of Gujarāt or Western Rājputāna), a Maurya principality apparently in southern Rājputāna or Mālwa, and the Gurjjara territory apparently round Bhinmal or Broach. The progress of the Arabs was stopped by the Chalukyas in the south, the Pratihāras in the east, and the Kārkoṭas in the north. But a new scene opened with the foundation of the kingdom of Ghaznī by Alptigīn in or about A.D. 962.

Fall of the Shāhiya Dynasty of Udabhāṇḍa

Alptigīn was formerly a slave of the Samanid rulers of Central Asia. This enterprising chief made himself independent in Ghaznī and conquered a part of the kingdom of Kābul. He died in A.D. 963. In A.D. 977 his sceptre passed into the hands of his son-in-law, Sabuktigīn. About this time a large part of the territory from Lamghan or Laghman to Kangra acknowledged the sway of Jaipal (Jayapāla) of the Hindu Shāhiya dynasty of Waihand (Udabhāṇḍa-

pur). The Hindu king heard reports from travellers how the Sultan of Ghaznī was encroaching on his dominions in the prosecution of "holy wars". To put a stop to his depredations, he advanced towards Ghaznī and met his enemy near a place called Ghūzak between Ghaznī and Lamghan. A snow-storm compelled Jaipal to conclude a humiliating peace, but he soon broke his engagements and brought on his head the wrath of the Sultān. The latter carried fire and sword into the territory of his antagonist and seized the districts in the neighbourhood of Lamghan. In 997 Sabuktigīn died, and in the next year the crown went to his famous son, Mahmud. In 1001 the new Sultān inflicted a crushing defeat on Jaipal near the city of Peshāwār. Unable to survive this disgrace, the defeated king burnt himself on a funeral pyre and was succeeded by his son, Ānandapāla (A.D. 1002 or 1003). In 1006 Mahmud took Multān, but the final subjugation of the city was postponed till 1010. In 1008 he routed the troops of Ānandapāla, led by prince Brāhmaṇapāla, at the battle of Waihand, and pursued the fugitives as far as Bhimnagar.

Ānandapāla continued to offer resistance from the fastnesses of the Salt Range (Nandana). His successor, Trilochanpāla, carried on the struggle with the assistance of Saṃgrāmarāja of Kāshmīr. In the end he was compelled to retire to the east and conclude an alliance with the Chandella ruler of Kālinjar and other princes of Mid India. But he was again defeated on the river Ruhut (Rāhib) identified by some with the Rāmgaṅgā. He was assassinated in A.D. 1021–1022. With the death of his son and successor, Bhīma, in 1026 the dynasty came to an end. Both al-Biruni and Kalhaṇa bear testimony to the courage and magnanimity of this noble line of kings who poured out their blood like water in defending the north-western gates of their country against the invader.

Mahmud did not remain content with the laurels he won in the Punjab. In 1014 he took Thānesar, and in the following years made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer the vale of Kāshmīr. He also burnt the temple of Mathurā. In 1018 he sacked Kanauj and extinguished the once powerful empire of the Pratihāras. In 1022–1023 he received the submission of Gwālior and Kālinjar. His most famous expedition, that against Somnāth in Kāṭhiāwār, was undertaken in 1025. The fall of the most celebrated Hindu shrine of the age in 1026 synchronised with the extinction of the Hindu Shāhiya kingdom of the Punjab. Four years later the Sultān died.

Mahmud's expeditions were mostly in the nature of plundering raids. The only permanent results of his arduous campaigns were

the annexation of the Hindu Shāhiya kingdom and certain other districts in the Punjab and the north-west borderland and the destruction of the morale of the Hindu armies. The raids of Mahmud must have made a profound impression on the minds of the great Rājput powers of Western and Central India that sought to divide among themselves the imperial heritage of the Pratihāras. During the period 1030–1192, that is to say from the death of Mahmud to the arrival on the scene of Muhammad of Ghur, the princes of the Indian interior enjoyed comparative immunity from foreign attacks. The Ghaznavid Sultāns now and then harried certain territories, and on one occasion one of their generals advanced up to Benares and sacked the holy city. But on the whole, the invaders could not make much headway. The terror inspired by their ravages had, however, lasting consequences.

Revival of the Vikramādityan Tradition

The situation in the latter part of the eleventh and first three quarters of the twelfth century was not unlike that in the sixth century A.D. The old empires of the Pratihāras and the Pālas were falling to pieces like the Gupta empire after Budha Gupta. The task of defending Hindustān fell upon their former feudatories who now set up as independent sovereigns. The fight with the Yamīnī Turks and their successors became as engrossing a subject as the earlier struggle with the Huns. There was a revival of the Vikramādityan tradition, and the example of the great hero who braved a Śaka king in his own city, and that of his famous grandson who beat back the incursions of the Huns and restored an empire after vanquishing the enemies of his family, must have inspired the greater rulers of the new age—kings like Gāṅgeyadeva of Chedi, Sindhurāja of Mālwa, and Tribhuvanamalla of Kalyāṇ, who called themselves Vikramāditya or the new Sāhasāṅka. The new spirit is well illustrated by the execution of the pusillanimous Pratihāra king Rājyapāla by a Kachchapaghāta chief who was "anxious to serve Vidyādharadeva", and the attempt of Tribhuvanamalla Vikramāditya VI to supersede the Śaka era by a new national reckoning. But the cases of Rājyapāla, the representative of the Imperial Pratihāras, and of Tribhuvanamalla himself who fought against his own brother, are symptomatic of the weakness of the Hindu princes—their internal strife and failure, except on rare occasions, to take concerted action in a time of national crisis. The Hindus of the age, moreover, lacked the invigorating and dynamic influence of a new impulse that was then

moving vast masses of mankind in Western and West Central Asia.

Bhīma I, the Chaulukya or Solanki king of Gujarāt, had failed to bar the route to the holy shrine of Somnāth. After the invader was gone, he sought to repair the ravages which the Turks had inflicted on the habitations of the gods. He began to build at Somnāth a temple of stone in place of the former temple of brick and wood. His general, Vimala, built the famous Jaina temple at Abu, known as Vimala Vasahi. Other edifices were constructed in the time of the successors of Bhīma, particularly in the days of Siddharāja Jayasimha and Kumārapāla. Two later rulers, Mūlarāja II Solanki and Vīradhavala Vāghela, attained greater success than Bhīma I in repelling the attacks of invaders. Two officers of Vīradhavala, Vastupāla and Tejahpāla, have immortalised their names by the construction of magnificent shrines at Śatruñjaya, Girnār and Abu. In course of time the feelings of hostility roused by Turkish aggression wore off to a certain extent and king Arjuna of Gujarāt had the broadmindedness to endow a mosque erected by a Muslim ship-owner of Ormuz, and provided for the expenses of certain Shiite festivals. He further laid down that under the management of the Muslim community of Somnāth any surplus was to be made over to the holy districts of Mecca and Medina. In 1297, Gujarāt passed into the hands of Sultān 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī of Delhi.

The throne of the Paramāras of Mālwa was, in the days of Sabuktigin, occupied by the famous Muñja, a great patron of poets, whose power was crushed by Taila II, the Chalukya king of the Deccan. His brother and successor, Sindhurāja, assumed the significant title of Navasāhasāṅka, that is, the new Sāhasāṅka or Vikramāditya. Bhoja, son and successor of Sindhurāja, claims victories over the Turushkas or Turks. He made his name immortal by his patronage of learning, just as the Gujarāt statesmen did by their temples. A versatile scholar, he wrote treatises on numerous subjects, including poetics, rhetoric, polity, philosophy, astronomy and architecture. He also established a college for Sanskrit studies. The construction of temples and the encouragement of Sanskrit culture seem to have been parts of a common programme. The attempts of Pericles to restore Greek temples and foster Greek learning after the ravages of the Persian wars may be recalled in this connection. The example of Bhoja was imitated by Hindu statesmen in later ages, notably by the rulers of Vijayanagar.

The Chandellas of Jejākabhukti or Bundelkhand had, under Dhaṅga, Gaṇḍa, and Vidyādhara, possibly attempted to help the

cause of the Shāhis of Udabhāṇḍa, but their efforts proved unavailing. Vidyādhara, however, seems to have matured plans, along with the Kalachuri king and Bhoja of Mālwa, for the restoration of the prestige of Hindu arms. But the power of his family soon declined. There was a revival under Kīrtivarman Chandella in the closing years of the eleventh century, but some of his successors were not so strong as he was. One of them, Paramardideva, suffered defeats at the hands of Prithvīrāja III, the Chauhan king of Ajmer and Delhi. The power of the Chandellas was shattered by Qutb-ud-din Aibak in A.D. 1202. Like the contemporary dynasties of Gujarāt and Mālwa, the Chandellas showed their interest in the work of reconstruction by the building of temples at Khajuraho and the encouragement of poets like Kṛishṇa Miśra who adorned the court of Kīrtivarman.

Politically, a more important *rôle* was played by the Kalachuri kings, Gāṅgeyadeva and his son Lakshmī Karṇa. The former, as already stated above, assumed the title of Vikramāditya and took under his protection the holy cities of Allahābād and Benares. Lakshmī Karṇa seems to have made himself master of the Southern Doāb and did much to revive the glorious traditions associated with the empires of Harsha and Bhoja I. He conciliated the rulers of Bengal by matrimonial alliances and pushed his conquests southwards as far as Kaliṅga. Had he lived longer, he might have restored the shattered fabric of imperialism in northern India and erected an effective barrier against the advance of the Turks. His career was cut short by a hostile combination of the rulers of Gujarāt, Mālwa, Bundelkhand and the Deccan. The Kalachuris still retained considerable power under his son and grandson, but the control of the Madhya-deśa (upper Ganges valley) soon passed into the hands of the famous house of Gāhaḍavāla.

The founder of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty was Chandradeva who rose to power in the closing decade of the eleventh century. His grandson, Govinda Chandra, was the real ruler of the Madhya-deśa for half a century, first as crown prince (1104–1114) and later on as king (1114–1154). He founded an empire embracing the greater part of the present United Provinces and Bihār. He successfully defended Jetavana (in northern Oudh), Benares and other holy places of Buddhists and Hindus alike against the Turks. But a rival empire was established in the west by the Chauhan Vigraharāja IV with seats at Ajmer and Delhi. The latter city was probably founded by a Tomara chieftain about the middle of the eleventh century A.D., and it was from the Tomaras that the Chauhans obtained possession of this famous capital. Prithvīrāja

III, nephew of Vigraharāja IV, came into conflict with Jayachchandra (Jai Chand), grandson of Govinda Chandra. The rivalry of the Chauhans and the Gāhaḍavālas weakened them both till all of them were swept away by a fresh deluge that was gathering force in the wilds of Ghur in Afghānistān.

Bengal under the later Pālas and the Senas

Sheltered by the Kalachuris and the early Gāhaḍavālas who for more than a century protected the Madhya-deśa against a rush of invasion from the north-west, the local dynasts of Eastern India passed through vicissitudes of a different kind. The name of the Pāla sovereign of Gauḍa was still invoked in distant Benares as late as A.D. 1026. In the following decades, the Pālas entered into close relations with Lakshmī Karṇa, the great king of Chedi. The passing away of Karṇa almost coincided with a fresh disaster that fell to the lot of the Gauḍa empire. A local rising in North Bengal drove the Pālas from Varendrī. The power of the house of Dharmapāla was restored by Rāmapāla, mainly with the assistance of his Rāshṭrakūṭa relations. But the restored kingdom had no long lease of life left to it, being ultimately overthrown in Bengal by Vijaya Sena, scion of a family that came from the Deccan. The struggle between indigenous and foreign military chieftains in Bengal ended in the victory of the latter.

The conqueror founded a new line, that of the Senas. The ancestors of the new king came from Karṇāṭa in the Deccan. They established a principality in Western Bengal which came into prominence under Sāmanta Sena. Sāmanta Sena seems to have retained some connection with his southern compatriots. After him came Hemanta Sena. Vijaya Sena, son of Hemanta Sena, allied himself with the illustrious family of the Śūras and founded the independent sovereignty of his own dynasty. He vanquished the king of Gauḍa, apparently of Pāla lineage, and the neighbouring princes of North Bihār, Assam and Orissa. He also laid the foundation of the city of Vijayapura in Western Bengal, which became the metropolis of the Sena family. Vikramapura in Eastern Bengal, which was apparently conquered from the Yādava Varmans, possibly served as the second capital. It was certainly graced occasionally by the presence of the Sena sovereign.

The son and successor of Vijaya Sena was Ballāla Sena, a name famous in Bengali legend as the reputed founder of *Kulinism*, a system of nobility. He is also credited with the authorship of two notable works, the *Dānasāgara* and the *Adbhutasāgara*.

Ballāla Sena's son, Lakshmaṇa Sena, probably began to rule in A.D. 1178–1179 or 1184–1185, though some scholars push the date of his accession much further back and regard him as the founder of the Lakshmaṇa Sena era of A.D. 1119. He seems to have served his apprenticeship in the work of government as viceroy or military governor in charge of some district in Kaliṅga. On coming to the throne, he distinguished himself as a conqueror and a patron of learning. He claims to have pushed his conquests as far as the southern ocean, reduced Kāmarūpa to subjection and vanquished the king of Benares, who is no other than the Gāhaḍavāla king of Kanauj. Among the poets who graced his court, the most eminent were Jayadeva, the author of the *Gīta-Govinda*, and Dhoyī, the author of the *Pavanadūta*. The last-mentioned work contains an interesting description of the Sena capital. The Senas, however, failed to stem the tide of Muslim invasion once the dyke erected by the Gāhaḍavālas was broken. Rai Lakhmaniya, usually identified with Lakshmaṇa Sena, had to flee before the advancing arms of Malik Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad Khalji towards the close of the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century. His sons, Viśvarūpa Sena and Keśava Sena, maintained the struggle against the "Garga Yavanas", that is to say, the Muslim invaders from the Kābul valley, and preserved their independence in Eastern Bengal till the latter half of the thirteenth century.

The Later Chalukyas and the Cholas

Karṇāṭa, the home territory of the Senas, was from 973 to 1190 dominated, with a short intermission, by the Chalukya family established by Taila II. While the Shāhis of Udabhāṇḍa were trying to defend the north-western gates of India against the Turks of Ghaznī, the Chalukyas were engaged in bitter feuds with the Paramāras of Mālwa and the Cholas of Tanjore. They do not appear to have actually helped the foreign invaders like their predecessors, the Rāshṭrakūṭas. The Cholas, under Rājarāja I and his famous son, Rājendra Chola I, conquered nearly the whole of the present Madras Presidency. The generals of Rājendra carried their arms as far as the Ganges, while Chola admirals asserted their authority over several overseas territories including Ceylon, the Nicobar Islands and parts of the Malay Peninsula and the Archipelago. Rājendra inflicted a defeat on Mahīpāla I of Bengal. He also vanquished the Chalukya king of the Deccan plateau at Musangi. The prestige of the Chalukya arms was restored, to a certain extent, by Someśvara Āhavamalla, at Koppam,

but he suffered a crushing defeat at Kūḍal Śangamam at the hands of a son of Rājendra Chola I. In the last quarter of the eleventh and first quarter of the twelfth century the sovereignty of the Deccan was shared between Vikramāditya VI, the second son of Āhavamalla and Rājendra Chola (III) Kulottuṅga I, son of a daughter of Rājendra Chola I. As already stated above, Vikramāditya VI established a new era in the place of the old reckoning of the 'Śaka' king, and his example was followed by Siddharāja Jayasimha of Gujarāt and the Senas of Gauḍa. The reign of Vikramāditya VI stands as a landmark in the history of Hindu law, and saw the composition of a famous digest by the great jurist Vijñāneśvara. Poetry was also cultivated at the Chalukya court, and the celebrated author Bilhaṇa wrote his *Vikramāṅkadeva-charita*, or Deeds of Vikramāditya, to commemorate the achievements of his patron. Someśvara III, son and successor of Vikramāditya VI, was also a writer of repute.

Sometime after the death of Someśvara III, the power of the Chalukyas of Kalyāṇa was temporarily eclipsed by Bijjala Kala-churya and his sons. After 1190 the empire of Kalyāṇa split up into three parts, namely, the kingdom of Devagiri founded by the Yādavas, the kingdom of Warangal governed by the Kākatīyas and the kingdom of Dorasamudra ruled by the Hoysalas. The Chola empire also declined after Rājendra Chola Kulottuṅga. The southern part of the Chola dominions fell into the hands of the Pāṇḍyas. The home provinces formed a battle-ground between the Hoysalas, the Kākatīyas and other powers. In the country between the Godāvarī and the Ganges which had once been over-run by the great Rājendra Chola I, rose the empire of the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kaliṅga and Orissa.

Successors of the Imperial Chalukyas and Cholas

The independent Yādava kingdom of Devagiri was founded by Bhillama and was raised by his grandson Siṅghana to the position of the premier kingdom of the Deccan. Learning was encouraged, and a college of astronomy was established for the study of the works of Bhāskarāchārya, the celebrated astronomer. The age of the later Yādavas saw the composition of the famous works of Hemādri, Bopadeva, and Jñāneśvara. The rulers of Devagiri, however, proved unequal to the task of defending the Deccan against the northern invader in the manner of Gautamīputra and Pulakeśin II of old. In 1294 the troops of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī swooped down upon Devagiri and exacted a heavy contribution from

Rāmachandra, the Yādava king. In 1306–1307 Malik Kāfur again invaded the Yādava dominions and forced the king to pay tribute. The son of Rāmachandra was killed about 1312, and his son-in-law was flayed alive about 1317. Hindu sovereignty in Mahārāshṭra came to an end and was not restored till the seventeenth century.

The Kākatīyas rose to power under Prolarāja II. His grandson, Gaṇapati, extended his dominions as far as Kāñchī in the south. The kingdom flourished under Rudramma, daughter of Gaṇapati, who is highly extolled by the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo. The power of the dynasty was destroyed by the Sultāns of Delhi early in the fourteenth century.

The Hoysalas of Dorasamudra attained great power under Vishṇuvardhana and his grandson, Vīra Ballāla II. Under later kings they conquered a part of the Tamil country. Vīra Ballāla III, the last notable ruler of the house, sustained defeats at the hands of Kāfur, the general of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, and finally perished in or about A.D. 1342.

The Pāṇḍya kingdom, which won fame in the thirteenth century as the dominant power in the Tamil country and a great centre of international trade, was overrun by Kāfur early in the fourteenth century. After a brief period of Muslim rule, it was absorbed into the empire of Vijayanagar.

Orissa became a powerful kingdom under Anantavarman Choḍa Gaṅga whose descendants defended their dominions with some amount of success against the Muslim conquerors of Bengal. The Gaṅga line came to an end in 1434 when it was supplanted by the famous Kapilendra. In 1568 Orissa was finally conquered by the Muslims.

Like the Rājput kingdoms of the north, the princes of Southern India failed to offer a combined resistance to invaders and fell one by one. Only the Hindus beyond the Kṛishṇā and the Tuṅgabhadrā rallied under the banner of Harihara and Bukka, and for several centuries maintained their independence in the far south of India.

CHAPTER XIV

INDIAN CIVILISATION UNDER THE IMPERIAL GUPTAS AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

The Administrative System

The period of the Gupta emperors and their successors saw the gradual disappearance of kingless states. After the sixth century, monarchy becomes the only form of government that demands serious attention. Kingship was in most cases hereditary. The ruler was at times nominated by his predecessor, but some cases of election by the people or the nobles are recorded. Among notable instances of popular election are the enthronement of Gopāla by the *Prakṛitis* or constituent elements of the body politic of Bengal, and the choice of Brahmapāla by the people of Assam. We have also a similar instance in Southern India where Nandivarman Pallavamalla was raised to the throne by the *mūla prakṛitis.* More often the choice of a sovereign in a time of crisis was entrusted to a selected body of state nobles or Brāhmaṇas. In the kingdom of Thānesar it was a council of nobles headed by Bhaṇḍi that offered the crown to Harsha. Yaśaskara of Kāshmīr was chosen by an assembly of Brāhmaṇas. Kumārapāla of Gujarāt was selected by the state nobles sitting in council. Even in cases of nomination by a preceding ruler, the presence of the councillors (*Sabhyas*) and princes of the blood at the time of the formal act of selection was perhaps deemed to be necessary. There was no bar to the succession of a female, at least in certain parts of India, notably Kāshmīr, Orissa and the Telugu country.

The divine character of kingship received wide acceptance in the period under review. In the Allahābād Pillar inscription Samudra Gupta is not only represented as equal to Kuvera, Varuṇa, Indra and Yama, the presiding deities of the four quarters, but is considered to be the Incomprehensible Being who is the cause of creation and destruction, a god dwelling on earth, who was mortal only in that he performed the acts necessary according to the conventions of the world. In the literature of the age the king is considered to be the incarnation of Justice and the representative of Vishṇu, that is, God in his aspect as the Preserver. Like Vishṇu,

the ruler in certain parts of India was styled Śrī Prithvī Vallabha, that is, the Beloved of the Goddess of Fortune and of the Earth Goddess. Voices of protest against the view that the king was divine are raised now and then. Bāṇa regards the theory of the king's divinity as a delusion. "Though subject to mortal conditions, kings look on themselves as having alighted on earth as divine beings with a superhuman destiny; they employ a pomp in their undertakings only fit for gods and win the contempt of all mankind. They welcome this deception of themselves by their followers. From the delusion of their own divinity established in their minds, they are overthrown by false ideas." The old theory persists that the rulers do not exist for their own good but owe a debt to the people which they can discharge only by good government. The ideal ruler is he who "possesses an inner soul pervaded by the inclination for the acquittance of debts and obligations, and is occupied with the welfare of all mankind". The Chinese pilgrims, Fa Hien and Hiuen Tsang, the Arab merchant Sulaimān, and the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, bear testimony to the fact that the governments of Chandra Gupta II, Harsha, Bhoja I and Rudramma (Rudrāmbā) actually tried to translate this noble maxim into practice.

Many kings of the age were doughty fighters and lovers of manly sports like wrestling combats with wild beasts. But they were not mere rough soldiers and war-lords. A notable trait in the character of some of the most illustrious rulers of the period under review is their love of learning and the fine arts. In this respect the versatile Samudra Gupta in the north, and the "curious-minded" (*Vichitra-chitta*) Mahendravarman in the south, set examples that were imitated by some of the ablest among their successors.

Some of the occupants of the throne were themselves scholars and poets of no mean repute. Among royal authors, Harsha of Kanauj, Mahendravarman of Kāñchī, Amoghavarsha I of Malkheḍ, Bhoja of Dhārā, Someśvara III of Kālyāṇa, Vigraharāja IV of Ajmer, Ballāla Sena of Bengal and Aparārka of the Northern Konkāṇ deserve special mention as they have left works that are studied even at the present day. The earliest among them figure mainly as dramatists, but later kings were interested in a wide range of subjects. Several rulers are justly entitled to the designation of polymath. The latest kings took special interest in legal and astrological studies.

Kings normally "held all the levers and handles which worked the governmental machinery". They maintained the laws of the realm and were responsible for defending the people against

external attacks. They administered justice, usually led troops in war and had the largest share in the formulation of policy. But it was impossible to shoulder the burden of administration without assistance. "A single wheel could not move." Hence sovereigns had to employ ministers. In the early Gupta period, the most important among these functionaries were the *Mantrin* (confidential adviser), *Sandhivigrahika* (minister in charge of peace and war), and *Akshapaṭalādhikṛita* (minister in charge of records). There were also important officials whose duties were mainly of a military character. Such were the *Mahābalādhikṛita* and the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*. There was, however, no clear-cut division between civil and military officials. A *Mantrin* could become a *Mahābalādhikṛita*, and the post of *Amātya* could be combined with that of *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*. The office of a minister (*Sachiva*) was often hereditary. One class of officials had the special designation of *Kumārāmātya*. They figure as ministers for peace and war, generals, councillors, feudatories and district officers. Some of them were directly under the sovereign; others were attached to princes or placed under provincial governors. The expression Kumāra in the designation Kumārāmātya may correspond to the *Elaya*, *Pina*, *Chikka*, or *Immadi* of South India, and is best rendered by the term "cadet". In the far south of India during the Chola period, we have an important functionary, styled *Olaināyagam*, who had to approve every order issued by the king.

With the efflux of time need was felt for the elaboration of the administrative machinery in certain departments. This was particularly the case in regard to the Foreign Office where special *Sandhivigrahikas* were appointed to deal with the affairs of certain definite areas. Thus, in the records of certain rulers of the Deccan we find references to a *Karṇāṭaka Sandhivigrahika*. In certain records we have references to an official styled *Mahāpradhāna* and another designated *Sarvādhikārin* whose functions might have resembled those of the *Mukhyapradhāna* of the Marātha period and the *Sarvārthachintaka* of Manu. Though the number of ministers was not definitely fixed, Manu's recommendation of seven or eight ministers may have been followed at times. It is doubtful if there was a central *Mantriparishad* comparable to the *Parishā* of the Maurya inscriptions. If such an institution did exist, it does not find prominent mention in the epigraphs. The *Sabhyas* referred to in the Allahābād Pillar inscription in connection with the nomination scene of Samudra Gupta may have been courtiers attending a *Durbar* as well as members of a central council. An important functionary in several States governed by Hindu kings was the

Rāja-guru. The *Purohita* or royal chaplain, though a prominent personage in a Brāhmaṇical court, does not figure in the records of devout Buddhist kings.

Justice was often administered by the sovereign himself or a high official at the centre or in the provinces. Judges at the head-quarters of a district had apparently the assistance of the chief *Seths* and *Kāyasthas* of the locality, representatives of the commercial and official classes. In villages, justice was administered by royal officials with the help of the members of the village council or assembly. In certain cases the assembly alone sat in judgment and passed sentence. Special courts of self-governing corporations are also alluded to in literature. The jury system, according to some authorities, is found to have been in full swing at least in southern India. Judicial methods included trial by ordeal.

Indian armies in the period under review consisted mostly of elephants, infantry and cavalry. Chariots gradually fell into disuse. Some of the kings, especially in the desert tracts of Rājputāna, maintained camel corps. A few maritime States had their navies with which they effected the conquest of riparian principalities or islands scattered in the Indian Ocean. Many provinces, especially in the south, had no good breed of horses and had to import animals from Arabia. Marco Polo refers to the unfavourable climate of South India in which these horses could not thrive. He also speaks of the ignorance of the Indian horse-keepers. Recruitment to the army was not confined to a particular caste. Some of the ablest commanders of the period were Brāhmaṇas. A successful leader of North Bengal in the eleventh century A.D. belonged to the Kaivarta caste. Armies of the period included hereditary forces as well as local militia and feudal levies.

The principal sources of revenue were the *bhāga* or the king's share (normally one-sixth) of the produce of the land, certain additional imposts on the rural population, as well as duties at ports, ferries and fortified stations. Rulers also got incomes from the crown-lands, mines, etc., and tribute from vassal chiefs. Taxes were often collected in kind, but payments in cash were also allowed. Forced labour (*Vishṭi*) was not unknown, and we hear of a special kind of *corvée* called *Bhoṭṭa-vishṭi* in lands on the borders of Tibet. Extra taxation was resorted to in times of emergency, from which even temples were not exempted. Mention may be made in this connection of imposts apparently levied by the central government to deal with the menace from marauding tribes. To this category belong possibly the *Malla-kara* and

Turushka-daṇḍa of mediaeval epigraphs. Extra cesses were also levied for special purposes by local authorities.

Kingdoms and empires were divided for administrative purposes into units styled *Bhukti*, *Deśa*, *Rāshṭra* and *Maṇḍala*. *Bhukti* is a very common designation in the north. It usually meant a province or administrative division under an officer styled *Uparika*. It was usually subdivided into *Vishayas* or *Maṇḍalas*. The post of *Vishayapati* (that is the officer in charge of a Vishaya or district) was filled either by a royal official styled *Kumārāmātya*, or *Āyuktaka*, or by a feudatory *Mahārāja*. The Vishayapati was sometimes assisted in the work of administration by the guild-president, the chief scribe and other leading men of the locality. In the far south of India the largest administrative division was the *Maṇḍala*, which was subdivided into *Valanāḍus* or into *Nāḍus* and *Koṭṭams*. The lowest administrative units were the *Kūṛram* (union of villages) and *grāma* (village), each under its own headman who was assisted by assemblies (*Ūr*, *mahāsabhā*). The village headman had his counterpart in the *nagarapati* of cities. In certain rural areas the village assembly consisted of the whole adult population, in others of Brāhmaṇas or a few great men who were selected by a kind of ballot. The assembly appointed committees to look after specific departments, like tanks, temples, justice, etc. The work of these self-governing bodies was supervised by royal officers (*Adhikārin*). Towns and cities had, as already stated, special officers styled *nagarapati*, and certain Gupta records refer to the existence of town councils (*Parishad*).

Social Conditions

Social conditions underwent rapid changes during the period under review. This is hinted at by those epigraphs that refer to some of the most distinguished rulers of the age as "employed in settling the system of castes and orders" and in "keeping the castes confined to their respective spheres of duty". Attempts in this direction were not, however, always crowned with success. We find members of the priestly and artisan classes taking to the profession of arms, and members of the soldier caste figuring as merchants. Vaiśyas and Śūdras figure as rulers of mighty kingdoms. Marriage rules were still somewhat elastic, and intermarriages between peoples of different castes, creeds and races were not unknown. Complications were introduced by the influx of foreigners, sections of whom were admitted into the framework of caste. Some of the earlier foreign immigrants rank as degraded Kshatriyas in the legal codes. Those who came after the fall of

the early Gupta empire and carved out independent or semi-independent principalities for themselves, usually found a place among the thirty six clans of the Rājputs, who now take the place of the Kshatriya families of olden times. Among the new Rājput clans, the Huns and the Pratihāras or Parihars deserve special mention. According to the view generally held by scholars, the Pratihāras belonged to the race of the Gurjaras who came into prominence for the first time in the sixth century A.D. While the ruling families of foreign immigrants and Hinduised border tribes often ranked as Rājputs, the rank and file came under less exalted social groups like the Gujars, the Dhaki Khasiyas, the Bhotiyas and others.

People belonging to the higher castes in the Madhya-deśa (Mid India) did not, according to the testimony of Fa Hien, "kill any living creature, nor drink intoxicating liquor, nor eat onions or garlick". Sharply distinguished from them were the Chāṇḍālas, who lived apart from others. When they entered the gate of a city or a market-place they struck a piece of wood to make themselves known so that men knew and avoided them, and did not come into contact with them. The existence of impure castes is vouched for, not only by Indian and Chinese records, but by al-Biruni. If the last-mentioned scholar is to be believed, the doctrine of impurity was extended to foreigners in the north-west towards the end of our period. The Hindus of several provinces in the interior, however, did not share the views of their brethren about whom al-Biruni wrote.

The position of women in our period presents certain interesting features. Women of the upper classes in certain areas took a prominent share in administration. The queen-consort clearly occupied an important position in the Gupta period. In succeeding ages we have clear and unequivocal testimony to the existence of queens-regnant in Kāshmīr, Orissa and the Andhra country. A Chinese author represents an Indian princess as administering the government in conjunction with her brother. In some of the provinces, notably in the Kanarese country, women acted as provincial governors and heads of villages. The seclusion of women was not generally observed in these regions. Some of the royal ladies in the Deccan are referred to in contemporary epigraphs as not only skilled in music and dancing but also displaying their proficiency in the arts in public. Princess Rājyaśrī, in Northern India, is represented as sitting behind her royal brother and listening to the exposition of the doctrine of the Great Vehicle by the Chinese Master of the Law. These facts not only suggest that

absolute seclusion of women was unknown in certain families, but that girls, at least of the upper classes, received a liberal education and took a keen interest in the cultural activities of the age. The practice of *Svayamvara*, or self-choice of husband, had also not gone out of use. There was, however, another side to the picture. Polygamy was widely prevalent, but women were not ordinarily allowed to contract a second marriage. The custom of burning widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands was coming into general use, at least among the ruling clans.

State of the Country and the General Condition of the People

We have interesting glimpses of the state of the country and the condition of the people during the Gupta and the post-Gupta periods, thanks to the accounts left by a number of Chinese and Muslim observers. The information derived from this source is supplemented by the testimony of contemporary epigraphs. Referring to the "Middle Kingdom", roughly corresponding to the upper Ganges valley, Fa Hien, the earliest of the Chinese pilgrims whose records have come down to us, and who paid a visit to this country in the days of Chandra Gupta II, observes: "The people are numerous and happy. They have not to register their households, or attend to any magistrates and their rules. The king governs without decapitation or other corporal punishments. People of various sects set up houses of charity where rooms, couches, beds, food and drink are supplied to travellers." South Bihār, in particular, was noted for the wealth and prosperity of its cities and the benevolence and the righteousness of its people. The elders and the gentry of the locality established houses for dispensing charity and medicines. All the poor and destitute in the country, and all who were diseased, went to these houses and were provided with every kind of help. Doctors examined their diseases. In the city of Pāṭaliputra there were two large and beautiful monasteries to which students and inquirers flocked from all quarters to investigate the principles of duty to one's neighbours.

More than two centuries later, when Hiuen Tsang came to this country, vast stretches of territory, notably in the Swāt valley and in Eastern India, once prosperous, now wore an appearance of desolation. Splendid edifices that had adorned them were now in ruins. But with these exceptions the country in general enjoyed the benefits of good government. Taxes were light and the people were not subject to an arbitrary tyranny. Forced service, though not unknown, was sparingly used and labour was usually paid.

Traces of slavery are, however, found up to the end of our period. The roads and river-routes were less safe than in the Gupta period. The criminal code had become more sanguinary. Liberal provision was still made for education and charitable institutions. The great educational establishments in Pāṭaliputra were no longer in existence as the city itself was in ruins. A great seat of learning had, however, sprung up at Nālandā. "In the establishment were some thousands of brethren, all men of great ability and learning. They were looked up to as models by all India. Foreign students came to the establishment to put an end to their doubts, and then became celebrated." Another great centre of culture was Valabhī in Western India. These two places, Nālandā and Valabhı, are compared by I-tsing to the most famous educational institutions of China. We are told that "eminent and accomplished men assembled there in crowds, discussed possible and impossible doctrines, and after having been assured of the excellence of their opinions by wise men, became far famed for their wisdom."

Other centres of learning sprang up in subsequent ages. The names of the first two sovereigns of the Pāla dynasty are associated with the famous establishments of Uddaṇḍapura (Bihār) and Vikramaśilā. Bhoja, the versatile ruler of Mālwa, established a Sanskrit college at Dhārā. During the reign of Siṅghana, the Yādava king of Devagiri in the Deccan, a College of astronomy was founded by a grandson of Bhāskarāchārya. In the far south, Pallava kings extended their patronage to educational institutions at Kāñchī and Bāhur. The last-mentioned place was situated near Pondicherry and had a College where provision was made for the study of the Vedas, Vedāṅgas, Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya, Purāṇas and Dharmaśāstras (ninth century A.D.).

Hiuen Tsang has some interesting observations to make regarding the dress and manners of the people of this country. Their inner clothing and outward attire had no tailoring. As to colour, a fresh white was esteemed. The men wound a strip of cloth round the waist and up to the armpits and left the right shoulder bare. The women wore a long robe which covered both shoulders and fell down loose. The hair of the crown of the head was made into a coil, all the rest of the hair hanging down. Garlands were worn on the head and necklaces on the body. In the far north of India, where the climate was cold, closely-fitting jackets were worn, somewhat like those of the Tartars.

Regarding the character of the people, the pilgrim observes that they were of hasty and irresolute temperament but of pure moral principles. They would not take anything wrongfully, and

they yielded more than fairness required. They did not practise deceit, and they kept their sworn obligations.

The country was famous for its vegetable and mineral wealth. Onions and garlic were little used, and people who ate them were ostracised. Milk, ghee, granulated sugar, sugar candy, cakes and parched grain with mustard seed oil were the common food. Fish, mutton and venison were occasional dainties. The flesh of oxen and some other animals was forbidden. Household utensils were mostly earthenware, few being of brass. The use of copper spoons by the sick is also mentioned. Gold and silver were abundant and were largely used for purposes of coinage. Besides gold and silver coins, cowries and small pearls were also used as media of exchange. Precious substances of various kinds from the sea-ports were bartered for merchandise.

Certain South Indian records throw light on the standard of living of the common people in the days of Chola supremacy. It has been inferred that the average income of a family per month was about rupees sixteen for a member of the upper classes and rupees eight for a member of the lower orders.

Religion

The Gupta age is usually regarded as an era of Brāhmaṇic revival. There can be no doubt that Brāhmaṇism enjoyed imperial patronage. Some of the rulers make a pointed claim to have revived orthodox rites that had been in abeyance for a long period. But the claim need not be taken too literally. It has been rightly pointed out by a shrewd observer that the period of the Guptas is one of culmination, of florescence rather than of renaissance. The recrudescence of Brāhmaṇism in the Ganges valley is as old as the time of Pushyamitra, while in the south we have a long succession of dynasties that counted it as their proud boast to have repeatedly performed Vedic rites like the *Vājapeya* and the *Aśvamedha*. Some of the ablest among the foreign potentates and statesmen of the north, who dominated the stage of Indian history during the period that supervened between the age of the Śuṅgas and that of the Guptas, were the adherents of two great Hindu sects, namely, Śaivas and Bhāgavatas or Vaishṇavas, if not of the Vedic sacrificial religion itself.

The most noticeable features in the religious life of the people during the Gupta age were the growing importance of *Bhakti* (loving faith in God) and the love of fellow-beings which found expression in benevolent activities and toleration of the opinions of others.

Bhakti, that is, intense devotion to God conceived of as personal, a Saviour worthy of trust and ready to be gracious, is an important element of Vaishṇavism and Śaivism as expounded in the *Gītā* and the *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad*. "He who with unwavering practice of devotion (*bhakti yoga*) does God service has crossed beyond the strands" and is fit for salvation. *Bhakti* to Śambhu, that is Śiva, led to the hollowing out by a minister of Chandra



BUDDHA (GUPTA AGE)

Gupta II of a cave at Udayagiri. Devotion to other Adorable Beings found vent in the construction by various sections of the community, royal personages, officials, priests, guilds, etc., of lofty pillars, beautiful gateways, awe-inspiring images and splendid temples in honour of Vishṇu, Kārttikeya, the Sun, the Tīrthaṅkaras and the Buddha. The wide prevalence of a feeling of toleration is well illustrated by epigraphic and literary references to the

employment by Vaishṇava kings of Śaivite and Buddhist officials and the affection felt by Jainas for Brāhmaṇas and by Brāhmaṇas for the Tīrthaṅkaras and the Buddha. Fa Hien testifies to the benevolence and righteousness of the people of the Ganges valley, who not only directed their attention to the ceremonial side of religion, e.g. the celebration of processions of images, but also to the practice of charity. Non-violence was observed by the whole community except the outcastes. Abstention from intoxicating liquor must have been a contributory factor in determining the proclivities of the people in this direction.

A list of the important religious sects that flourished at the close of the Gupta age is given in Bāṇa's *Harsha-charita*. We find mention in that work of Jainas, both Digambaras (sky-clad, that is naked) and Śvetāmbaras (white-robed), Vaishṇavas, both Bhāgavatas and Pañcharātras, Saugatas or Buddhists, Mashkarins, possibly identical with the Ājīvikas, and adherents of various schools of philosophy including the Sāṅkhaya, the Lokāyatika, the Vaiśeshika, the Vedānta, and the Nyāya.

Buddhism had powerful exponents during the Gupta age in the famous sages and philosophers Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Kumārajīva and Dignāga. In the succeeding centuries it gradually lost ground. The Hun invasions must have led to the destruction of numerous monastic establishments in the north-west as well as in the east of India. With the deification of the Buddha and his admission into the Vishṇuite pantheon as an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa-Vishṇu, there was little to distinguish the Buddhist laity from their Brāhmaṇical neighbours. Intermarriages between Buddhists and Śaiva or Vaishṇava royal families illustrate the absorption and assimilation of the votaries of the reforming cult by the followers of more orthodox creeds. Brāhmaṇa councillors begin to figure as prominently in Buddhist courts as in the darbars of Brāhmaṇical princes. The growth of Tantricism made the distinction between the Vajrayāna type of Buddhism and certain forms of Śaivism and Śāktism purely nominal. The advent of saintly poets and zealous reformers who sang the praise of Vishṇu and Śiva and vigorously combated the heretical doctrines of the Great Vehicle must have weighted the scale in favour of Orthodox Hinduism. With the destruction of the last remnants of the great Buddhist establishments that once covered the entire face of Hindustān by a new race of conquerors in the twelfth and succeeding centuries, Buddhism almost vanished from the land of its birth.

Jainism seems to have enjoyed popularity for a long time in Bengal, certain regions in the United Provinces and the Kanarese

country in South India. Hiuen Tsang found the religion flourishing in Bengal in the seventh century. But it was in Western India that it had its most important stronghold. The canon of the white-robed Jainas was reduced to writing in the fifth or sixth century A.D. as a result of the deliberations of a council held at Valabhī in Western India. The Digambara sect attained eminence during the rule of the Chalukyas of Vātāpi and the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Malkheḍ. The Chalukya king, Vinayāditya (A.D. 680–696), had for his spiritual adviser a famous teacher of the Digambaras. Amoghavarsha (A.D. 815–877), one of the greatest of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, liberally patronised the sect. Jainism also received the homage of Bijjala Kalachurya of Kalyāṇa (1156–1167) and of Kumārapāla Chaulukya of Anhilvara (1143–1172). The last-mentioned monarch was a patron of the famous Jaina Āchārya Hemachandra. To Vimala, Vastupāla, Tejahpāla, ministers of Gujarāt, we owe some of the splendid shrines at Abu, Girnār, Śatrunjaya and other places.

Both Jainism and Buddhism had eventually to yield the palm to the more orthodox forms of Hinduism in most of the provinces where they had once enjoyed popularity and prosperity. Brāhmaṇism had gained ascendency in the Madhya-deśa since the days of Pushyamitra. It enjoyed the almost uninterrupted patronage of the imperial power in that region since the days of the Imperial Guptas. Even Harsha, who had a genuine admiration for Buddhism, is described in official records as a devotee of Maheśvara, that is Śiva. Many of the princes, specially in Mid-India, strove to restore the social order and discipline enjoined in Brāhmaṇical scriptures. The heterodox faiths no doubt continued in some of the outlying provinces, thanks to the patronage of the Pālas, the Karas of Orissa and the Western Gaṅgas of Mysore, but the religion of the Vedas and Purāṇas triumphed in the end in Bengal under the Senas, in Orissa under the Eastern Gaṅgas and in the far south under the later Tamil kings and the Hoysalas. Traces of Buddhism are found in the Deccan as late as the time of Vikramāditya VI, while the prestige of Jainism remained undimmed till the days of Bijjala. It was the rise of the Śrī Vaishṇava sect under Rāmānuja and the Liṅgāyat or Vīra Śaiva sect under Basava that turned the scale definitely in favour of the votaries of Vishṇu and Śiva. Both these great apostles had their precursors.

Śiva Worship

The worship of Śiva found favour with many of the highest officials during the early Gupta age. Pāśupata or Śaiva *āchāryas*

are constantly mentioned in contemporary records of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. These include not only inscriptions but literary works like those of Varāhamihira, Bāṇa, Mahendravarman Pallava and Hiuen Tsang. In the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Śaivism seems to have replaced Vaishṇavism as the imperial religion of Northern India. It counted among its votaries supreme rulers, foreign as well as indigenous, such as Mihiragula, Yaśodharman, Śaśāṅka and Harsha. Among renowned Pāśupata *āchāryas* of the age was the famous Udyotakara, the writer of a gloss on Vātsyāyana's commentary on the *Nyāya Sūtras*. In the eighth century the country of Kerala on the Mālābar coast produced a teacher who, though not an adherent of any form of sectarian Śaivism, did much to popularise devotion to Śiva among the teeming millions of India. This was the famous Śaṅkarāchārya, one of the greatest Hindu philosophers and teachers of the post-Gupta period. Śaṅkara came of a Brāhmaṇa family of Kaladi. He was an ardent Vedāntist and the most powerful exponent of the doctrine of pure monism (*advaita*) which he elucidated in his commentaries on the classical Upanishads, the *Bhagavad Gītā* and the *Brahma Sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa. He was not only a great thinker but an able organiser. Among the most durable monuments of his organising zeal are the famous monasteries at Śriṅgeri in Mysore, Dwārakā in Kāṭhiāwār, Puri in Orissa and Badrināth on the snowy heights of the Himālayas. He died at a comparatively early age, and his memory is held in affectionate reverence by millions of Hindus throughout India.

The province of Kāshmīr in the far north of India produced in the ninth and succeeding centuries a number of teachers who are reckoned among the greatest exponents of the Śaiva doctrine and philosophy. No less important than the Kāshmīr school of Śaivas were the Tamil and Kanarese saints and scholars known as the *Nāyanārs* and *Vīra Śaivas* respectively. Foremost among the Tamil Śaiva saints were Tirujñāna-Sambandar, Appar, Sundaramūrti and Manikka Vasahar. Kanarese Śaivism found a champion in the famous Vasava, who has already been mentioned above. Vasava was a minister of the Jaina king, Bijjala of the Kalachurya dynasty of Kalyāṇa, who lived in the middle of the twelfth century A.D. A distinguishing feature of the Vīra Śaiva sect of Karṇāṭa to which Vasava belonged was its zeal for social reform and special solicitude for the emancipation of women from the thraldom of rigid custom.



ŚIVA OR MAHĀDEVA (JAVA)

The Vaishṇava Movement

Āchāryas devoted to the cult of Vishṇu figure prominently in inscriptions of the early Gupta period. The Gupta emperors themselves were votaries of Vishṇu. Bāṇa mentions two important Vaishṇava sects, namely the Bhāgavatas and the Pañcharātras, perhaps worshippers of Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa respectively, in connection with the search for the princess Rājyaśrī in the Vindhyan wilds. Some of the early Chalukya kings of Vātāpi professed Bhāgavatism and the famous bas-reliefs at Bādāmi testify to the popularity of the cult in the Deccan in the sixth century A.D. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* refers to South India, particularly the Tamil country, as a special resort of devotees of Vishṇu. The earliest among the Tamil Vaishṇava saints were the Ālvārs. The most renowned among them seem to have flourished in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. The Ālvārs represented the emotional side of Vaishṇavism, and they were followed by a line of *āchāryas* who represented its intellectual side. Foremost among the *āchāryas* were Nāthamuni, Yāmunāchārya and Rāmānuja. The last-mentioned teacher was the son of a Brāhmaṇa who lived in a village near Madras. Rāmānuja made Kāñchī and Śrīrangam the chief centres of his activities, but the hostility of the Chola government compelled him to seek shelter at the Hoysala court in the Mysore country. He died in the twelfth century A.D. He combated the absolute monism of Śaṅkara and laid emphasis on *Bhakti* as a means of salvation. The school of philosophy that he established was known as *Viśishṭādvaita* or qualified monism. His followers are known as Śrī Vaishṇavas. Many of the great mediaeval reformers of India drew their inspiration from his teachings.

Shortly after Rāmānuja lived Madhva, a famous exponent of the dualistic school of the *Vedānta*.

Vedic Rites

Vedic rites which Samudra Gupta made attempts to revive after a long period of abeyance in certain areas, had their staunch advocates in the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā* or *Karma Mīmāṁsā* school represented by Śavarasvāmin, Prabhākara and Kumārila. Śavara's acquaintance with the Great Vehicle may point to a date later than Nāgārjuna of the Kushān-Sātavāhana period. Prabhākara is later than Śavara but earlier than Kumārila, who is probably an elder contemporary of Śaṅkara. In spite of the teaching of the *Mīmāṁsakas*, the *Karma mārga*, or the way of deliverance by the performance



VISHṆU (BENGAL)

of Vedic rites, does not seem to have attained amongst the masses of the Hindus the same popularity as the *Bhakti mārga* professed by the ardent sectaries devoted to the cults of Śiva, Vishṇu and associated deities. It is significant that the ancient rite of *Aśvamedha* tends to fall into disuse after the age of the Guptas and the early Chalukyas.

Literary Activity

Bühler observed long ago that during the Gupta age court poetry was zealously cultivated in India. Samudra Gupta took delight in the title of *Kavirāja* or king of poets. He associated with learned people and is said to have put an end to the war between good poetry and prosperity. There can hardly be any doubt that many poets who were none too wealthy received his patronage. The most notable poet of his court was Harisheṇa, the writer of the Allahābād panegyric. Chandra Gupta II, Vikramāditya, son of Samudra Gupta, followed in the footsteps of his father, and counted among his high ministers a poet named Vīrasena-Śāba. Tradition associates the name of Kālidāsa, the greatest of Sanskrit poets after the immortal writers of the two ancient epics, with king Vikramāditya and the *āchārya* Dignāga, who probably flourished during this time. The fame of Kālidāsa and Bhāravi is well attested by Bāṇa and Ravikīrti who adorned the courts of Harsha and of Pulakeśin II respectively. The rulers of Valabhī extended their patronage to the famous author of the *Bhaṭṭi-kāvya*. To the Gupta period have also been assigned the celebrated dramatists who wrote the *Mṛichchhakaṭika*, the *Mudrā Rākshasa* and the *Devī Chandra Guptam*, but the matter is not free from doubt. The seventh century A.D. saw the composition of the works of Bāṇa, Mayūra, Bhartṛihari, Subandhu and the royal poets, Śrī Harsha and Mahendravarman. The portions of the *Purāṇas* dealing with the so-called future kings were apparently compiled during the Gupta age, and it is probable that the *Mahābhārata* received its latest accretions during the same epoch. In the domain of science the Gupta period produced the celebrated astronomers, Āryabhaṭa and Varāhamihira. Even before Varāhamihira's time Indians had invented the decimal notation. The law-books of Nārada and Bṛihaspati are also reckoned by several scholars as products of the same age.

In the post-Gupta period we have in addition to male writers a number of poetesses, among whom Śilabhaṭṭārikā deserves special mention. The *Kaumudī mahotsava* is also ascribed by some scholars



ANCIENT ASIA
English Miles
GREECE
EGYPT
ARABIA
RED SEA
Caspian Sea
Aral Sea
MEDIA
BACTRIA
DRANGIANA
ARACHOSIA
SIESTAN
CARMANIA
GEDROSIA
TURKESTAN
GOBI
DESERT
TIBET
HIMALAYA
MANCHURIA
SAKHALIN
JAPAN
PACIFIC OCEAN
PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
BORNEO
CELEBES
SUMATRA
JAVA
TAMRAPARNI
ARABIAN SEA
INDIAN OCEAN
Persian Gulf
R. Lena
R. Ob
L. Baikal
L. Balkash
Longitude East 80° of Greenwich

to a female dramatist, but her identity and date are uncertain. Among writers of the opposite sex, Bhavabhūti stands pre-eminent. Both he and Vākpatirāja enjoyed the patronage of Yaśovarman of Kanauj. Towards the end of the ninth century the court of Kanauj was adorned by Rājaśekhara.

Epic poetry and the drama in the period after the Great Guptas did not always reach the level of Bhāravi and Bhavabhūti. But the later age still produced poets and playwrights of ability like Māgha, Śrī Harsha, Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa, Kshemiśvara, and Krishṇa Miśra. Lyric poetry flourished long after Bhatṛihari, and the twelfth century saw the composition by Jayadeva of the *Gīta Govinda*, one of the sweetest of the Sanskrit song-books. Works of merit continued to be produced in other fields of learning and literature. The prose romance of Daṇḍin, the later versions of the didactic fables of the *Pañchatantra*, the ethical compositions of Śāntideva and treatises on polity written by Kāmandaka and Somadeva may be mentioned in this connection. In one domain, that of historical literature, the post-Gupta period produced works the like of which had not been seen in earlier ages. The most notable among them were the *Harsha-charita* of Bāṇa, the *Rāma-charita* of Sandhyākara, the *Vikramānka-charita* of Bilhaṇa and the *Rājataraṅginī* of Kalhaṇa. Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and other eminent philosophers of the epoch under review do not suffer by comparison with the great masters of the days of Kanishka and the Sātavāhanas. In astronomy, the period of Yādava rule produced the great Bhāskara. We have towards the close of the age under review a number of polymaths like Bhoja of Dhārā, Someśvara III of Kalyāṇa and Kshemendra of Kāshmīr who showed their interest in such diverse subjects as poetry, rhetoric, polity, philosophy, astronomy, architecture, medicine, alchemy, music and painting.

CHAPTER XV

COLONIAL AND CULTURAL EXPANSION

From time immemorial the people of India had free and intimate intercourse with the outside world. Even in the dim pre-historic age, the Neolithic people, as we have seen above, had relations with the Far East, and there are good reasons to believe that they emigrated in large numbers, both by land and sea, and settled in Indo-China and the Indian Archipelago. In the succeeding age, while a high degree of civilisation flourished in the Indus valley, there was undoubtedly a familiar intercourse with the countries of Western and Central Asia. Of the two important races that moulded Indian civilisation, the Aryans apparently, and the Dravidians possibly, came to India from outside, and necessarily relations were established and maintained, at least for some time, with the countries where they had lived before the occupation of India. It would, therefore, be reasonable to assume that India as a whole had never led an isolated life completely cut off from the rest of the world.

The intercourse between India and the countries by which she was surrounded on the north, east and west was maintained during the historical period. In the west, there were trade relations with Babylonia, and also with Syria and Egypt. So far as the most ancient periods are concerned, we have to rely upon indirect evidence, such as the discovery of Indian articles in those lands or the use of Indian names for these articles. From the Maurya period we possess more definite evidence. But the most detailed account that we possess of this trade belongs to the first century A.D. Towards the latter half of this century a Greek sailor, living in Egypt, undertook a voyage to India along the coasts of the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea, and recorded a minute account of his experiences in a book called *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. We learn from this book that there was active trade between India and the western countries. There were important harbours on the coast such as Barbarike, Barygaza, Muziris, Nelcynda, Bakarai, Korkai, and Puhar, and ships built and fitted up by Indians sailed from these ports with their merchandise which consisted, among other

things, of pearls, precious stones, spices, unguents, and fine cotton cloths called muslins, all of which were in great demand in western countries.

These goods were carried to the harbours on the sea-coast from inland cities by a network of roads. We learn from the same book that Indians settled in some islands of the Arabian Sea for purposes of trade, and the island of Socotra had a colony of Indian merchants.

The account of the *Periplus* is supplemented by later writers. Pliny, for example, complains that for the purchase of luxurious articles Rome pays every year a million sesterces to India. The statement of Pliny is corroborated by the actual discovery of a large number of Roman coins in India which must have been paid for the Indian goods and carried here by way of trade.

It is further proved by the Indian missions sent to Roman emperors. The king of Pāṇḍya sent a mission to Augustus in or about 26 B.C. In later periods we hear of seven missions to Roman emperors. The trade with Rome and other western countries was carried through the important port of Alexandria where goods, carried by sea up to the Red Sea coast, were transported either by land, or by small boats through canals of the Nile. There was also a land-route from India to the Mediterranean coast which ran through Persia and along the shores of the Caspian, to Syria and Asia Minor. This route had become familiar after the invasion of Alexander the Great. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Palmyra (in Syria) was one of the principal centres of this trade.

Both the sea and land routes came under the control of the Arabs when they rose to power in the seventh century A.D. Henceforth the Arabs carried on an active trade with India and we have interesting records of it in the chronicles of the Arab merchants.

It is a well-known fact that culture and civilisation follow in the wake of trade and commerce. We find accordingly that the Indian religion spread to the western countries. Aśoka sent Buddhist missionaries to western Asia, northern Africa and south-eastern Europe, and claimed that the tenets of that religion were welcomed in these regions. We have no means of ascertaining the truth of this from independent evidence, but there is no doubt that even long after Aśoka people in Alexandria showed interest in Buddhism, and that both Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical religion were widely prevalent in several countries of western Asia before the advent of Islam. The knowledge of Indian philosophy and literature in the West is also an undoubted fact. There is, however, equally little doubt that Western culture also flowed to India. The knowledge of Greek and

Roman astronomy and Greek influence on the art and coinage of India are undisputed facts. The Arabs imbibed a great deal of Indian culture, and carried it, along with Indian merchandise, to the western countries. Indian medicine and the wonderful invention of the decimal notation in Arithmetic, among others, became through the Arabs the universal property of the world.

In Central Asia the cultural conquest almost completely overshadows the trade relations of India. Here, partly by missionary propaganda, and partly by the political influence of the Kushāns, Buddhism became almost the universal religion of the nomadic peoples that settled in the vast region between the shores of the Caspian and the Wall of China. Indians also settled in large numbers in the region round modern Khótan. The physical aspects of this region have changed so completely that it is now difficult to imagine that flourishing Indian colonies once dotted the area which now lies buried under the sands of the desert of Gobi. Yet the archaeological explorations of Sir Aurel Stein in this inhospitable tract have laid bare the ruins of numerous Buddhist *stūpas* and monasteries, the images of Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical gods, and many manuscripts and shorter records written in Indian languages and Indian alphabets. Sir Aurel Stein has remarked that whilst he moved in these excavated areas under the ground he could have believed himself to be in the familiar surroundings of an ancient Indian city in the Punjab, so complete was the Indianisation of these out-of-the-way colonies. Even as late as the seventh century A.D., when Hiuen Tsang passed through Central Asia on his way to and back from India, he noted the dominance of Buddhism and Indian culture over this wide area. It is believed that Chingīz Khān, the great Mongol leader of the thirteenth century, professed some form of Buddhism.

From Central Asia Buddhism spread to China and there it remains a living faith, even to-day, among her untold millions. It is difficult to exaggerate the influence which Buddhism and Indian culture exerted upon the ancient civilisation of China. She showed the proverbial zeal of the new convert. Bands of Chinese monks undertook the perilous journey to India, both by land and sea, in order to study at first hand the religious beliefs and practices of Indian Buddhists and to collect Buddhist books and images. Hundreds and thousands of Buddhist books were carried from India to China and then translated into Chinese. For this purpose not only did the Chinese themselves learn Sanskrit and Pāli, but they also invited Indian Pandits to go to China and collaborate with them in the arduous task of translating the sacred scriptures

of Buddhism. Hundreds of Indian scholars settled in China and dedicated their lives to the pious task. It is singular to note that there are Chinese translations of Buddhist texts whose originals can no longer be traced in India. In addition to this intimate contact established by religion, we have to take note of the political and commercial relations between India and China, and the existence of a fairly regular traffic by way of the sea.

From China, Buddhism spread to Korea, and from Korea to Japan. Buddhism is still a living faith in both these countries, and has moulded their civilisation during the last fifteen hundred years.

Tibet forms a narrow enclave between India and these northern countries. It was not, however, such an exclusive and isolated region as it is to-day, and a regular route from China to Nepāl passed through it. Tibet became a powerful kingdom in the seventh century A.D., and Srong-tsan Gampo, one of its best-known kings (seventh century A.D.), introduced Buddhism into his country. He had married a princess from China and another from Nepāl, and presumably the influence of his queens converted him to the new faith. Along with the new religion, he introduced Indian alphabets which were in use in Khotan, and thus was paved the way for a new culture and civilisation in Tibet. As in the case of China, Tibetan Buddhists came to India in large numbers, and the proximity of India enabled them to come into closer contact with the home of Buddhism. The Pāla emperors helped towards the reform of Buddhism in Tibet, and there was a lively intercourse between Tibet and the Pāla kingdom. Tibetan monks studied at the monasteries of Nālandā and Vikramaśilā, and many Indian Buddhist monks visited Tibet. The name of Atīsa Dīpaṁkara, a monk of Eastern Bengal, who visited Tibet in the eleventh century A.D. in the days of Nayapāla, is still held in the highest veneration there. Hundreds of the sacred texts of Buddhism were translated into Tibetan, of which two famous collections, *Tanjur* and *Kanjur*, still exist.

The spirit of maritime adventure in India found its full and free scope in the south-east. Across the Bay of Bengal lay Indo-China and the Malay Archipelago. They were peopled by primitive races, and held almost a monopoly of the world's spice trade. These fertile tracts were also rich in minerals and soon drew the attention of the Indians. The eastern coast of India, from the mouth of the Ganges to Cape Comorin, was studded with ports, some of which are named in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. The author of this book refers to some of the Far Eastern countries as Chryse, or the Golden Land. He implies, though he does not expressly state,

that there was a coasting voyage from Bengal to those regions. Ptolemy, in the second century A.D., knew the names of important trading centres in the Malay Peninsula and the islands of Java and Sumatra. Buddhist texts, written about the same period, give a long list of trading centres in the Far East which agrees fairly well with that of Ptolemy. These names are mostly in Sanskrit. There is thus no doubt that by the second century A.D. Indians had developed important trading relations with the Far East. We learn from Ptolemy that there was a direct route from Palura (not far from Chicacole and Gañjām) across the sea to the Malay Peninsula.

Indian literature has faithfully preserved the traditions of the early days of this perilous voyage to unknown lands beyond the sea. The stories preserved in the *Jātakas*, the *Kathāsaritsāgara* and other similar collections frequently refer to traders' voyages to Suvarṇabhūmi—the land of gold, which was a general designation of several lands in the Far East. Traders returned with immense riches from the land whose very soil was supposed to be made of gold. On the other hand, many met with shipwreck and there were also sufferings and miseries of other kinds. Some stories represent young Kshatriya princes, dispossessed of their hereditary kingdoms, sailing to Suvarṇabhūmi to restore their fortunes.

To some such Kshatriya enterprise we perhaps owe the foundation of Indian political power in these far-off regions. From the second century A.D. onwards we find reference to kingdoms ruled by persons with Indian names. Their religion, social manners and customs, language and alphabet are all Indian and we may therefore regard these States as Indian colonial kingdoms. Between the second and fifth centuries A.D. such kingdoms were established in the Malay Peninsula, Cambodia, Annam, and the islands of Sumatra, Java, Bali and Borneo. The history of these kingdoms is known, partly from the Sanskrit inscriptions found in those countries, and partly from the accounts preserved by the Chinese. The Brāhmaṇical religion, mainly Śaivism, flourished in these regions, though Buddhism was also not unknown. The indigenous people adopted the civilisation of their masters and there was a gradual fusion between the two races. Hindu customs and manners were no doubt modified to some extent by coming into contact with these people, but still for nearly a thousand years the essential features of Indian civilisation were the dominant characteristics of society in these regions.

The Indian colonists established great kingdoms, some of which lasted for more than a thousand years and continued to flourish

even long after the end of Hindu rule in India. On the mainland of Indo-China there were two powerful kingdoms, those of Champā and Kambuja. The kingdom of Champā comprised, at its greatest extent, nearly the whole of modern Annam. Some of its kings, such as Jaya Parameśvaravarmadeva Īśvaramūrti (*c*. 1050–1060), Rudravarman (*c*. 1061–1069), Harivarman (1070–1081), Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Jaya Indravarman (*c*. A.D. 1163–1180), Jaya Siṁhavarman (*c*. 1257–1287), were great heroes and defended their country successfully against the attacks of their western neighbours, the Kambujas, and the great Mongol chief, Kublai Khān. They had diplomatic relations with the Chinese. After a glorious existence of more than thirteen hundred years (*cir*. A.D. 150–1471) their power was virtually broken by the repeated attacks of their northern neighbours, the Annamese, and in the sixteenth century the Hindu kingdom was overrun by these Mongolian hordes. There were many flourishing cities in Champā, and the whole country was adorned with beautiful temples, both Hindu and Buddhist.

The origin of the Hindu kingdom of Kambuja is shrouded in mystery. According to an old legend, Kauṇḍinya married Somā, a Naga princess, and founded the royal dynasty of Kambuja. He planted a spear which he had obtained from Droṇa's son Aśvatthāmā. Another version makes the hero a son of Ādityavaṁsa, king of Indraprastha. In any case, we can trace the earliest Hindu kingdom in Kambuja to the first or second century A.D. It occupied the southern part of Cambodia and was called Fu-nan by the Chinese. It rose to great power, and exercised suzerainty over several vassal states. On its southern frontier was the vassal kingdom of Tuen-sien. A Chinese author writes about this kingdom as follows: "More than a thousand Brāhmaṇas from India reside there. The people follow their doctrines and give them their daughters in marriage. They read their sacred books day and night." The kings of Fu-nan sent ambassadors to both India and China.

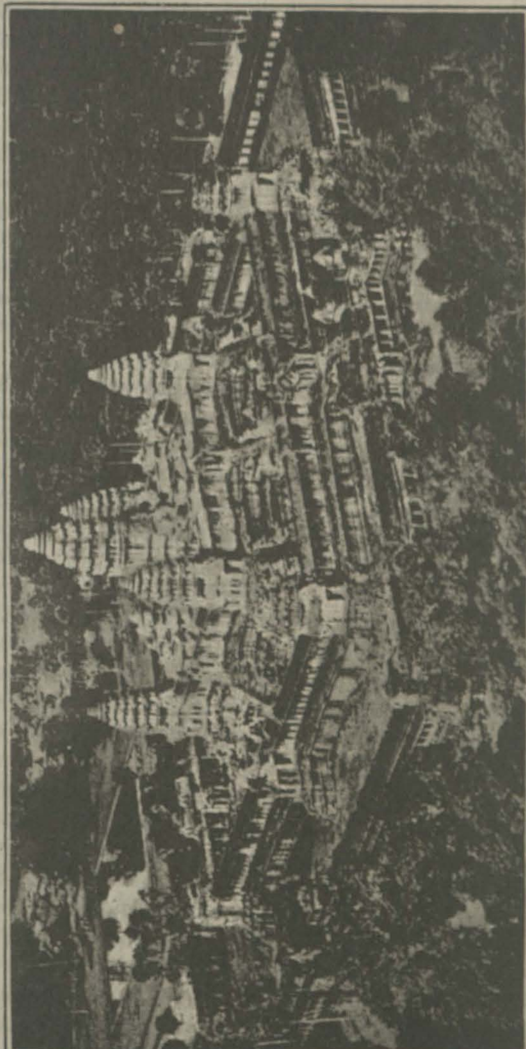
The position of supremacy passed in the sixth century to Kambuja-deśa, originally one of the vassal states of Fu-nan. Kambuja-deśa, at first only a small principality in the north-east, has given its name to the whole country, and its kings ruled in great splendour for nine hundred years. Among its most valiant kings may be named Jayavarman I, II, and VII, Yaśovarman, and Sūryavarman II. In the fifteenth century A.D. the invasions of the Annamites from the east and the Thais (who had conquered Siam) from the west reduced the powerful kingdom to a petty principality which still exists under the protectorate of the French.

The kingdom of Kambuja rose to far greater power than Champā. In addition to the whole of modern Cambodia, Cochin-China, Laos, Siam and parts of Burma and the Malay Peninsula were included within the Kambuja empire at its greatest extent. Numerous Sanskrit inscriptions give us the detailed history of their kings, and wonderful temples like Angkor Vat, those of Angkor Thom and a hundred others still tell the tale of their grandeur and magnificence.

Angkor Vat is, in every sense, a wonder of the world. It is a shrine originally dedicated to Vishṇu, and stands on the top of a terraced structure. Each terrace forms a sort of covered gallery, adorned throughout with sculptures, and leads to the next higher one by means of a staircase. There are numerous spires and towers, the eight towers at the four angles of the third and last gallery being each 180 feet high. After ascending the third terrace, we stand in front of the central shrine with its high tower (213 feet above the ground) dominating the entire region. The whole structure is surrounded by a stone enclosure provided with gates and galleries, measuring two-thirds of a mile east to west and half a mile north to south. Outside the enclosure runs a ditch, 700 feet wide. A stone causeway, 36 feet wide, with balustrade, runs over the ditch. It is continued as a broad paved road from the gate of the enclosure right up to the gate of the first terrace, a distance of about two furlongs.

Angkor Thom (Nagaradhāma?) is the modern name of the capital city founded by King Jayavarman VII. The city was square in shape, each side measuring more than two miles. It was surrounded by a moat 330 feet broad and enclosed by a high stone wall. The centre of the city was occupied by the grand temple of Bayon. It is pyramidal in shape and has three stages, adorned with high towers, nearly forty in number. The central tower dominating the whole structure is nearly 150 feet high. Each of these towers has a finely carved human face on four sides, representing Śiva, deeply absorbed in meditation. Several other massive structures, both religious and secular, surrounded the temple of Bayon.

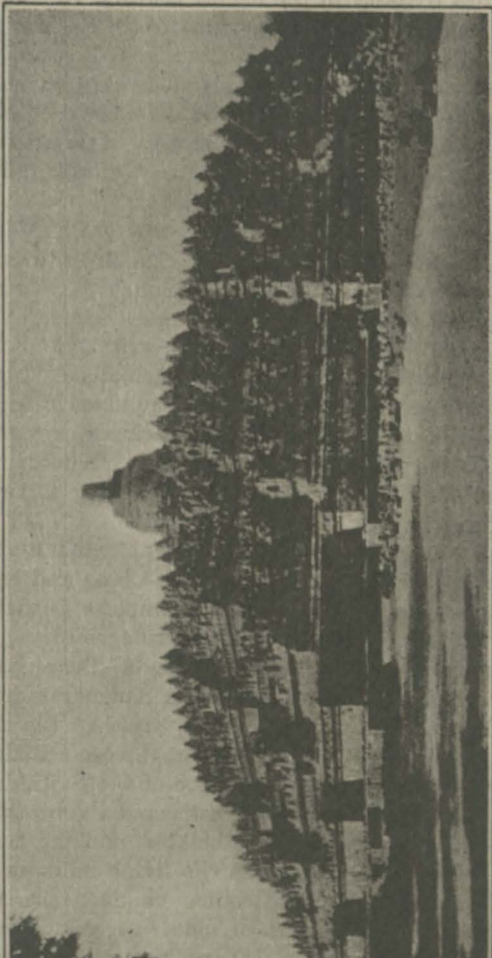
The city gates, with towers and guard-houses, were imposing structures. Five avenues, about 100 feet wide, run from the gates to the heart of the city, a distance of a mile. The city was adorned with a large number of tanks with embankments, and a royal terrace about 1,200 feet in length and 13 feet in height with sculptured reliefs of exquisite quality. In short, everything was conceived on a truly noble scale, and it was one of the grandest cities in the whole world in that age.



ANGKOR VAT (CAMBODIA)

The Malay Peninsula and the Indian Archipelago saw the rise and fall of two big Hindu empires. The first empire was founded by the Śailendra dynasty in the eighth century A.D. It comprised the Malay Peninsula and nearly the whole of the Archipelago including the islands of Sumatra, Java, Bali and Borneo. The Arab merchants who traded in these parts described in rapturous terms the power, wealth and magnificence of the grand monarch who exercised supreme sway and styled him "Mahārāja". He owned a powerful navy and made successful raids both against Champā and Kambuja. According to the Arab writers, he "was overlord of a large number of islands over a length of 1,000 parsangs or more". Many of these chroniclers tell the story how the Mahārāja every morning threw into a lake a brick made of solid gold. According to the Arab accounts, the Mahārāja was held in high esteem by the rulers of both India and China. Ibn Rosteh, writing about A.D. 903, remarks: "The great king is called Mahārāja, i.e. king of kings. He is not regarded as the greatest among the kings of India because he dwells in the islands. No other king is richer or more powerful than he, and none has more revenue." Ibn Khordadzbeh (A.D. 844–848) estimates the daily revenue of the king as two hundred maunds of gold.

The Śailendra kings were followers of Mahāyāna Buddhism and had diplomatic relations with the rulers of China and India. King Bālaputradeva sent an ambassador to the emperor Devapāla of Bengal (p. 166), requesting him to grant five villages to the monastery which he (Bālaputradeva) had built at Nālandā. Devapāla, of course, granted the request. It appears that the Śailendras derived their religious inspiration from Bengal which was then the chief centre of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India. Kumāraghosha, a Buddhist monk of Bengal, became the *guru* or preceptor of the Śailendras, and at his bidding the Śailendra emperor constructed the beautiful temple of Tārā. The Śailendras were great builders and the famous *stūpa* of Barabudur stands to this day as the living monument of their grandeur and magnificence. This noble building, situated on the top of a hill, consists of a series of nine successive terraces, each receding from the one beneath it, and the whole crowned by a bell-shaped *stūpa* at the centre of the topmost terrace. The lowest terrace has an extreme length of 131 yards. The five lower terraces are each enclosed on the inner side by a wall supporting balustrades so as to form four open galleries. The three uppermost terraces are encircled by a ring of *stūpas*, each containing an image of Buddha within a perforated framework. The galleries are covered with sculptures, illustrating scenes from Buddhist texts, and the



BARABUDUR (JAVA)

balustrades are decorated with small niche-temples containing images of Buddha. The images and sculptures are the finest examples of Indo-Javanese art. When we remember that the structure is nearly 400 feet square and that its successive galleries are full of sculptures and images of Buddha, exhibiting the highest skill and workmanship, we may well understand why Barabudur is referred to as the eighth wonder of the world. The art of Java and Kambuja was no doubt derived from India and fostered by the Indian rulers of these colonies, but Barabudur and Angkor Vat far exceed in grandeur of conception and skill of execution anything that we know of in India itself.

The Śailendras ruled in glory till the eleventh century A.D. when the Cholas cast covetous eyes upon the rich maritime empire. Rājendra Chola I (p. 188) possessed a magnificent fleet and invaded the dominions of the Śailendras. His efforts were successful and he conquered a large part of the Śailendra empire. But it was not an easy task to keep such distant provinces under control. The Śailendras continued the struggle and shook off the Chola supremacy after nearly a century. But soon their power declined and an ill-fated expedition against the island of Ceylon in the thirteenth century brought about the final disruption of the empire.

The decline and downfall of the Śailendras gave an opportunity to an aspiring kingdom in the island of Java to assert its power. A Hindu kingdom was established in the island as early as the fourth century A.D. but it was conquered by the Śailendras. Java formed a part of the Śailendra empire till the ninth century A.D. when it recovered its independence. The seat of political power was, however, removed from the central part of the island, which was at one time the centre of Śailendra power and contained their famous monuments, including Barabudur. Henceforth Eastern Java, with its seat of power at first at Kediri and then at Singhasari, played the dominant part in politics. Towards the close of the thirteenth century A.D. a new royal dynasty was founded by king Vijaya with the city called Tikta-vilva (bitter *vilva* fruit) or its Javanese equivalent, Majapahit, as its capital. The kingdom of Majapahit conquered the surrounding islands, and by the year A.D. 1365 the empire of Majapahit included nearly the whole of the Malay Peninsula and the Malay Archipelago. Roughly speaking, it comprised the present Dutch possessions in the Archipelago with the addition of the Malay Peninsula, but excluding perhaps northern Celebes.

Early in the fifteenth century A.D. a fugitive Hindu chief of Java founded the kingdom of Malacca, which soon rose to be a great political power and an important commercial centre. The conversion of its second king to Islam made Malacca a stronghold of that power, which soon reacted on neighbouring territories. The new faith penetrated into Java, in the wake of trade and commerce, and even some members of its royal family were converted to it. By a concerted attempt of the votaries of the new faith, the ruler of Majapahit was driven from the throne at the beginning of the sixteenth century. With the fall of the Hindu kingdom of Majapahit, the whole of the island was converted to Islam. But the royal family and a large element of the Hindu population took refuge in the island of Bali, which had been a Hindu colony for nearly a thousand years. With the exception of this island, where Hinduism flourishes even to-day, the rest of the Malay Archipelago, generally speaking, adopted the faith and culture of Islam.

Indian art and literature flourished in Java to an extent unknown elsewhere. There are still hundreds of temples in ruins, and an extensive literature, in manuscripts, based on Sanskrit. The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* were most popular in that island, and even to-day furnish the theme of their popular shadow-play, called Wajang, and theatrical performances. With the fall of Majapahit, artistic activities came to an end in Java.

We may conclude with a broad survey of the Indian colonies in the Far East. For nearly fifteen hundred years, and down to a period when the Hindus had lost their independence in their own home, Hindu kings were ruling over Indo-China and the numerous islands of the Indian Archipelago, from Sumatra to New Guinea. Indian religion, Indian culture, Indian laws and Indian government moulded the lives of the primitive races all over this wide region, and they imbibed a more elevated moral spirit and a higher intellectual taste through the religion, art and literature of India. In short, the people were lifted to a higher plane of civilisation. A greater India was established by a gentle fusion of races, which richly endowed the original inhabitants with the spiritual heritage of India. So long as Hinduism was in full vigour at home, Hinduism in the colonies was also a vital force, but the downfall of the Hindus in India also led to the decay of their colonial supremacy. The fountain head having dried up, the streams fed by it were also gradually choked, leading to their ultimate disappearance. It is no mere accident that from after A.D. 1100 or 1200 Hinduism had spent its force in the colonies, and the indigenous element

began gradually to assert itself till Islam was firmly planted in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries A.D.

The history of the colonies demonstrates the unsoundness of the popular belief that Hinduism cannot be adopted by foreigners but is meant only for those who are born within its fold. It shows the great vigour with which it could absorb and vitalise foreign culture and could elevate even the most primitive races to a higher sphere of culture and civilisation. If we remember that Indian culture and civilisation played a similar role, though perhaps in a lesser degree, in western, central and eastern Asia, we can realise an aspect of the true greatness of India, not always sufficiently emphasised. The colonial and cultural expansion of India is one of the most brilliant, but forgotten, episodes of Indian history, of which any Indian may justly feel proud.

CHAPTER XVI

MONUMENTS OF ANCIENT INDIA

The Pre-historic Period

In a previous chapter, reference has been made to the artistic relics of the pre-historic period. They consist, first, of Neolithic implements, and secondly, of seals, buildings, sculptures and implements of copper and bronze found at Mohenjo-Daro and a few other sites.

The most artistic objects at Mohenjo-Daro are no doubt the seal-engravings, portraying animals like the humped bull, the buffalo, the bison, etc. Regarding these, Sir John Marshall observes as follows:

> "In no sense can these objects be regarded as products of primitive or archaic art. Small as they are, they demonstrate a thorough comprehension of both work in the round and relief, and exhibit a spontaneity and truthfulness to nature of which even Hellenic art might not have been ashamed."

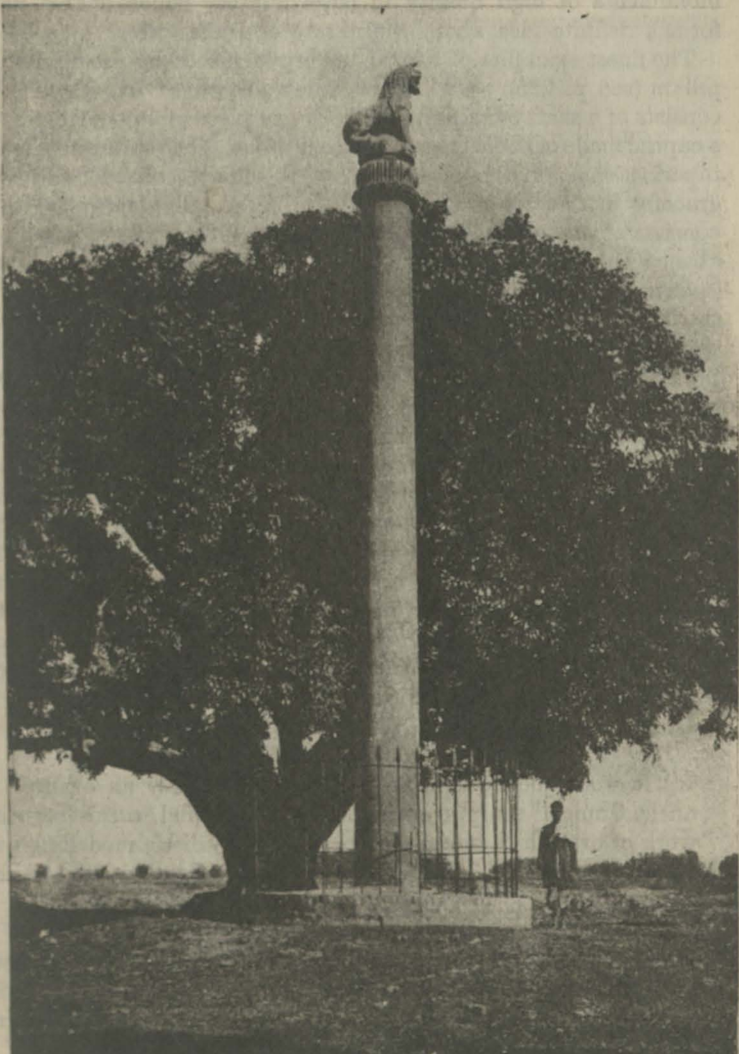
The same author makes the following remarks on two stone statues found at Harappa:

> "When I first saw them I found it difficult to believe that they were pre-historic; they seemed so completely to upset all established ideas about early art. Modelling such as this was unknown in the ancient world up to the Hellenistic age of Greece."

Maurya Period—the Origin of Art

The earliest ruins of Harappā and Mohenjo-Daro have been assigned to a period not later than 2700 B.C. For more than two thousand years after that we possess no ancient monuments that deserve any serious consideration.

In the historical period, we have ruins of monuments that may be referred to as early a period as 500 B.C. But it is only in the age of Aśoka, the great Maurya emperor, that we come across



AŚOKAN PILLAR, LAURIYA-NANDANGARH
By courtesy of the Archaeological Department and Lucknow University

monuments of high quality in large number which enable us to form a definite idea about the nature of Indian art.

The finest examples of Aśokan art are furnished by the monolithic pillars (see p. 225) on which his edicts are engraved. Each pillar consists of a shaft or column, made of one piece of stone, supporting a capital made of another single piece of stone. The round and slightly tapering shaft, made of sandstone, is highly polished and very graceful in its proportions. The capital, equally highly polished, consists of one or more animal figures in the round, resting on an abacus engraved with sculptures in relief; and below this is the inverted lotus, which is usually, though perhaps wrongly, called the Persepolitan Bell. A high degree of knowledge of engineering was displayed in cutting these huge blocks of stone and removing them hundreds of miles from the quarry, and sometimes to the top of a hill. Extraordinary technical skill was shown in cutting and chiselling the stone with wonderful accuracy and in imparting the lustrous polish to the whole surface. But these pale into insignificance before the high artistic merits of the figures, which exhibit realistic modelling and movement of a very high order. The capital of the Sárnáth Pillar is undoubtedly the best of the series. The figures of four lions standing back to back, and the smaller figures of animals in relief on the abacus, all show a highly advanced form of art and their remarkable beauty and vigour have elicited the highest praise from all the art-critics of the world. The late Dr. V. A. Smith made the following observation on the Sárnáth capital:

> "It would be difficult to find in any country an example of ancient animal sculpture superior or even equal to this beautiful work of art, which successfully combines realistic modelling with ideal dignity and is finished in every detail with perfect accuracy."

Many other pillars of Aśoka, though inferior to that of Sárnáth, possess remarkable beauty. It may be mentioned in this connection that the jewellery of the Maurya period also exhibits a high degree of technical skill and proficiency.

As compared with sculptures, the architectural remains of the Maurya period are very poor. Contemporary Greek writers refer to magnificent palaces in the capital city of Pāṭaliputra and regard them as the finest and grandest in the whole world. Some seven hundred years later the Mauryan edifices inspired awe and admiration in the heart of the Chinese traveller, Fa Hien. But these noble



CAPITAL OF AŚOKAN PILLAR, SÁRNÁTH (NEAR BENARES)
By courtesy of the Archaeological Department and Lucknow University

buildings have utterly perished. Recent excavations on the site have laid bare their ruins, the most remarkable being those of a hundred-pillared hall.

The extant architectural remains consist, besides a small monolithic stone rail round a *stūpa* at Sárnáth, mainly of the rock-cut Chaitya halls in the Barabar hills and neighbouring localities in the Bihar subdivision of the Patna district. Although excavated in the hardest rock, the walls of these caves are polished like glass.

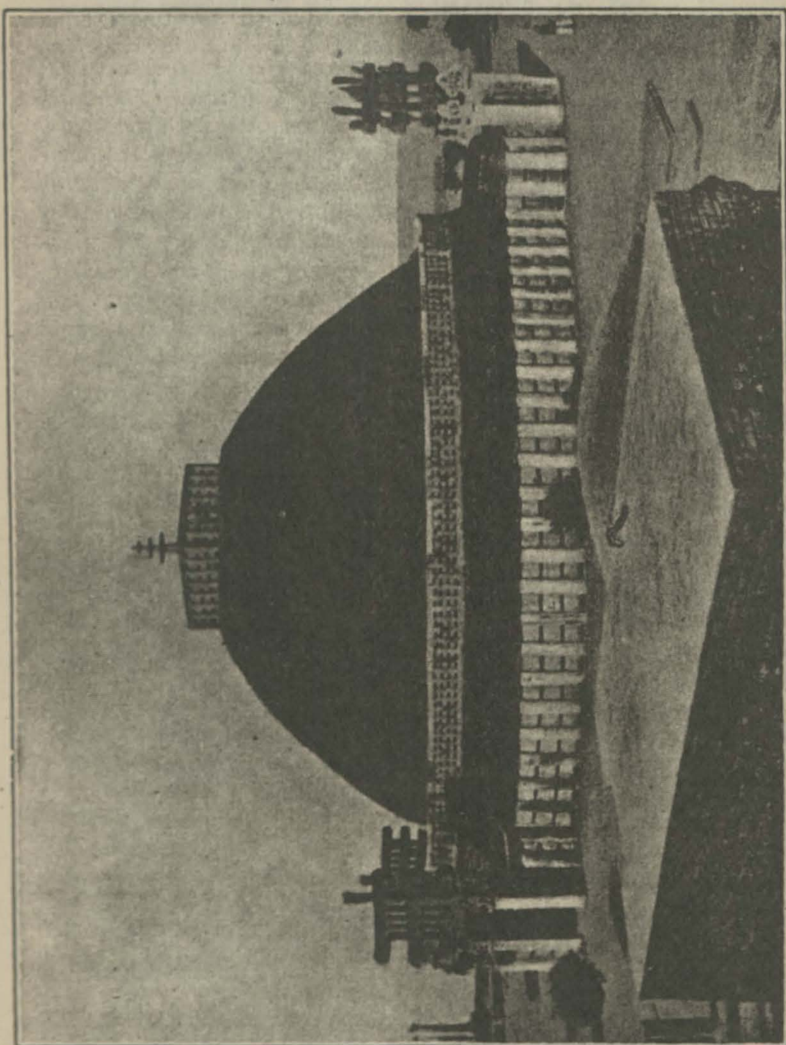
Aśoka also built quite a large number of *stūpas*. The *stūpa* is a solid domical structure of brick or stone, resting on a round base. It was sometimes surrounded by a plain or ornamented stone railing with one or more gateways, which were often of highly elaborate pattern and decorated with sculptures. Tradition credits Aśoka with building 84,000 *stūpas* all over India and Afghānistān but they have almost entirely perished. Some of them, enclosed and enlarged at later times, perhaps still exist, the most famous example being the big *stūpa* at Sāñchī, in Bhopal State, not far from Bhilsa. The diameter of the present *stūpa* is 121½ feet, the height about 77½ feet, and the massive stone railing which encloses it is 11 feet high. According to Sir John Marshall, the original brick *stūpa* built by Aśoka was probably of not more than half the present dimensions, which were subsequently enlarged by the addition of a stone casing faced with concrete. The present railing also replaced the older and smaller one. A similar fate has possibly overtaken many other *stūpas* of Aśoka.

It is quite evident from what has been said above, that Maurya art exhibits in many respects an advanced stage of development in the evolution of Indian art. The artists of Aśoka were by no means novices, and there must have been a long history of artistic effort behind them. How are we then to explain the almost total absence of specimens of Indian art before *c.* 250 B.C.?

This is the problem which faces us at the very beginning of our study of Indian art—highly finished specimens of art, belonging to such remotely distant periods as 2700 B.C. and 250 B.C., with little to fill up the long intervening gap.

We are not in a position to solve this problem until more data are available. In the meantime we can only consider various possibilities.

First, it is not unlikely that the artistic traditions of the Indus valley continued down to the Maurya period. The absence of specimens has to be explained by the supposition that most of the monuments being made of wood or other perishable materials have left no trace behind. Rare specimens in stone or other durable



materials may yet be unearthed by future excavations. This solution is prompted by the analogous problem of Indian alphabets. The earliest Indian alphabets so far known, and from which all the current Indian alphabets have been derived, are those found in the inscriptions of Aśoka. How they came to be evolved into that finished stage has been a mystery, and attempts have been made to derive them from various types of alphabets in Western Asia. But the numerous seals found at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappā with pictorial writings (in which an alphabet or a syllable is represented by a pictorial illustration of a material object) have induced some scholars to regard these as the origin from which the Brāhmī alphabet of Aśoka has been ultimately derived. In a similar way, the artistic traditions of the Aśokan period might be ultimately traced to those of the Indus valley. But in both cases, the intermediate stages of development or processes of evolution are hidden from us.

Secondly, it is permissible to hold that the art-traditions of the Indus valley were gradually lost and that Mauryan art has an independent history. What that history may be is involved in doubt, and it is possible to entertain two different views on the subject. We may either hold that, in addition to works in wood, the Indian artists of the pre-Maurya period also excelled in works in stone, though these have perished or not yet come to light. Or we may suppose that the Indians first began to work in stone during the Maurya period. The results of their endeavour to change from wood to stone are seen in the crude inferior pillars of Aśoka while those which are excellent and highly finished were the work of foreign artists employed by that great emperor. According to this theory, Indian art continued more or less under this foreign tutelage long after Aśoka, until a full-fledged Indian art was developed under the Imperial Guptas.

From the End of the Maurya Period to the Rise of the Guptas

The five hundred years that intervened between the fall of the Mauryas and the rise of the Gupta empire constitute a distinct period in the evolution of Indian art. So far as we can judge from extant remains, several important schools of sculpture flourished in different localities during this period—at Bhārhut (Nagod State, Central India), Bodh-Gayā, Sāñchī (Bhopal State), Mathurā and Gandhāra (North-Western Punjab and adjoining region) in Northern India, and Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunikoṇḍa (near the mouth of the Kṛishṇā) in South India.

In the second century B.C., during the reign of the Śuṅgas, a big *stūpa* was constructed at Bhārhut. Nothing now remains of the *stūpa* itself, but a portion of the railings that surrounded it, and one of the gateways, are now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The railing is made of red sandstone and consists, as usual, of uprights, crossbars and coping-stone. All these have sculptures engraved on them representing incidents from Buddha's life, Jātaka stories and many humorous scenes. Short labels incised below the sculptures enable us to identify the episodes represented therein. Taken individually, the human figures do not appear to be well executed and there are obvious defects in the physiognomy and posture of the bodies. But regarded as a mass, the sculptures represent the religious faiths and beliefs, the dress, costumes, and manners, and are executed with wonderful simplicity and vigour. We get an insight into the minds and habits of the common people of India, and a keynote of the joys and pleasures of life seems to pervade them all. Ancient India, with its robust optimism and vigorous faith in life, speaks, as it were, through these stones, in a tone that offers a sharp but pleasing contrast to the dark pessimistic views of life which some of the old religious texts are never tired of repeating. From this point of view, the art of Bhārhut is a great corrective to the impressions which we are likely to form from literature.

At Bodh-Gayā there is a small railing round the great temple. The railing probably belongs to about the first century B.C., but the temple is of a much later date. The sculptures on the railing belong to the same type as at Bhārhut, though the individual figures are somewhat better.

Sāñchī contains three big *stūpas* that belong to the period under review and, happily, they are all in a good state of preservation. The big *stūpa*, originally constructed by Aśoka, was enlarged during this period, and four gateways of elaborate construction were added to the railing, one in each cardinal direction. Although the railing is quite plain, the gateways are full of sculptures, illustrating the Jātaka stories and various episodes in the life of Gautama Buddha. The scenes represented are similar to those of Bhārhut, and convey more or less the same ideas, but the individual figures, the method of their grouping, mode of expression, and decorative elements—all show a far higher standard of technical skill and artistic conception. The obvious defects in the representation of the physique at Bhārhut are removed, and human figures are elegantly carved and shown in various difficult moods and poses. The sculptors of Sāñchī are throughout inspired

by a far higher sense of beauty, rhythm, and symmetry, and possess the difficult art of telling a complicated story in a simple lucid way. As at Bhārhut, we find before us a wonderful panorama of scenes of daily life and concrete illustrations of faith, hope, and ideals, though as a rule these are more complex and varied in character, showing a more intelligent appreciation of the facts and views of life.

On the whole, the railings at Bhārhut, Bodh-Gayā and Sāñchī may be regarded as three landmarks in the gradual evolution of



SĀÑCHĪ GATEWAY

art during the two centuries, 150 B.C.–A.D. 50. The Indian artists had now mastered the difficult technique and acquired a highly-developed aesthetic sense. The stone sculptures proved in their hands to be a valuable medium for expressing faiths and beliefs, and ideas and feelings.

Mathurā has proved a large treasure-house of ruins of this period. No big railing, like that of Bhārhut or Sāñchī, with a continuous series of relief sculptures, has yet come to light, but we have instead numerous fragments of smaller railings with

sculptures, and quite a large number of images, either detached or engraved in very high relief on some architectural fragments.



Photo: A. K. Coomaraswamy

KUSHĀN KING, MATHURĀ

The Mathurā sculptures are easily distinguished by the material used—a kind of spotted red stone. It is possible to classify the sculptures of Mathurā into two chronological periods. The earlier ones are rude and rough works, somewhat resembling those of

Bhārhut, but of a different style, and do not call for any special remark. The sculptures of the later period possess one distinguishing characteristic, viz. the representation of Buddha as a human figure. This is entirely unknown at Bhārhut, Bodh-Gayā and Sāñchī where Buddha is always represented by a symbol such as a wheel, a throne, or a pair of footprints, and never by any human figure. With the evolution of a human type of Buddha at Mathurā begins a new epoch in Indian art, and for centuries the best artistic efforts of India were directed towards giving a concrete expression of the spiritual ideals of India through the images of Buddha and other great beings.

The Gandhāra School

The Gandhāra school of sculpture has attained a celebrity perhaps beyond its merits. There was a time when European scholars considered it as the only school in ancient India which can rightfully claim a place in the domain of art. Many still regard it as the source of all subsequent development of art in India and the Far East. In spite of the undeniable merit of Gandhāra sculptures, the above views seem to be highly exaggerated.

The Gandhāra sculptures have been found in the ruins of Taxila and in various ancient sites in Afghānistān and the North-West Frontier Province. They consist mostly of images of Buddha and relief-sculptures representing scenes from Buddhist texts. Some technical characteristics easily distinguish them from all other specimens of Indian sculpture. In the first place, there is a tendency to mould the human body in a realistic manner with great attention to accuracy of physical details, especially by the delineation of muscles and the addition of moustaches, etc. Secondly, the representation of the thick drapery with large and bold fold-lines forms a distinct characteristic.

The Gandhāra sculptures accordingly offer a striking contrast to what we meet with elsewhere in India, *viz.* the smooth round features of the idealised human figures, draped in a transparent or semi-transparent cloth, closely fitting to the body and revealing its outline.

These distinguishing characteristics of Gandhāra sculpture were undoubtedly derived from Greek art, or, to be more precise, the Hellenistic art of Asia Minor and the Roman empire. Gandhāra art is accordingly known also as Indo-Greek or Graeco-Roman. There is, also, no doubt that this art owed its origin to the Greek rulers of Bactria and North-West India. But though the technique

was borrowed from Greece, the art was essentially Indian in spirit, and it was solely employed to give expression to the beliefs and practices of the Buddhists. With a few exceptions, no Greek story or legend, and no Greek art *motif* has been detected among the numerous specimens of Gandhāra sculpture. The Gandhāra artist had the hand of a Greek but the heart of an Indian.

The most important contribution of Gandhāra art was the evolution of an image of Buddha, perhaps an imitation of a Greek God like Apollo. Fine images of Buddha and Bodhisatva, and relief-sculptures illustrating various episodes of Buddha's present and past lives, are remarkably executed in a kind of black stone. For a long time it was believed that the Gandhāra Buddha image served as the model for those executed at Mathurā and other centres. But it is now recognised that the Buddha image was evolved independently at Mathurā and Gandhāra. There is a striking difference between the Buddha images of Gandhāra and those of the Indian interior. The former laid stress on accuracy of anatomical details and physical beauty, while the latter strove towards imparting a sublime and spiritual expression to the figure. The one was realistic and the other idealistic, and this may be regarded as the vital difference between Western and Indian art. The rich and varied contents of Gandhāra sculpture, like those of Sāñchī and Bhārhuṭ, hold before us a mirror, as it were, reflecting ancient life and ideals.



BODHISATVA, LAHORE MUSEUM

It may be added that both the schools of Mathurā and Gandhāra flourished under the lavish patronage of Scythian kings. The

portrait-statues of the Kushān kings add a novel feature to the art of this period. The Kushān art, particularly that of the Gandhāra school, spread through Chinese Turkestan to the Far East and influenced even the arts of China and Japan.

Somewhat later than the flourishing period of the schools of sculpture described above, beautiful *stūpas* were erected in the



India Office, London

CASING SLAB, AMARĀVATĪ STŪPA

lower valley of the Kṛishṇā river, at Amarāvatī, Jagayyapeta and Nāgārjunikoṇḍa. Not only were the railings of the Amarāvatī *stūpa* made of marble. but the dome itself was covered with slabs of the same material. It must have produced a marvellous effect, when intact. Unfortunately, the entire *stūpa* is in ruins, and the fragments of its railings have been removed, partly to the British Museum, London, and partly to the Government Museum at Madras. The sculptures of all the *stūpas* resemble one another and

are marked by striking differences in style from those of Northern India. Hence they are classed as belonging to a new school, viz. that of Amarāvatī. The figures at Amarāvatī are characterised by slim, blithe features and they are represented in most difficult poses and curves. But the scenes are mostly overcrowded, and although there is a distinct charm in individual figures, the general effect is not very pleasing. Yet there is no doubt that the technique of art had reached a high degree of development. The plants and flowers, particularly the lotuses, are most admirably represented in this school. The image of Buddha occurs here and there, but the Blessed One is often represented by a symbol. It thus points to the period of transition between Bhārhut, Bodh-Gayā and Sāñchī on the one hand and Mathurā and Gandhāra on the other.

At Nāgārjunikoṇḍa, important relics of the period have recently been discovered as a result of excavations made by the Archaeological Survey of India. The finds include a *stūpa*, two Chaityas and a monastery. Near the *stūpa* were found slabs of limestone illustrating scenes from Buddha's life. The panel shown on p. 238 represents the nativity and seven footprints of Buddha on the piece of cloth held by the deities, who were present to welcome the arrival of the Blessed One.

The period under review (*c.* 200 B.C. to A.D. 320) is not so rich in architecture as in sculptures. There were, of course, beautiful temples and monasteries, and the famous tower of Kanishka at Purushapur (Peshāwār) was one of the wonders of Asia. But all these have perished without leaving any trace behind. Excepting the *stūpas* referred to above, there is only one class of buildings which merit serious attention as works of art. These are the caves hewn out of solid rock, of which hundreds have been found in different parts of India. The caves of the Aśokan period were plain chambers, but now the addition of pillars and sculptures made them beautiful works of art. Some of the caves were used as monasteries, i.e. residences of monks. These were quite plain and consisted of a central hall with small cells on all sides. Others were used as Chaityas or halls of worship. A Chaitya was a fine work of art. The fully developed specimen consisted of a long rectangular hall with apsidal end (i.e. the side opposite the entrance was semicircular and not straight). Two long rows of pillars divided the hall into a nave (big central part) and two side aisles (narrow parts at the two sides). A small *stūpa*, called a *Dāgoba*, stood near the apsidal end. The front wall was decorated with elaborate sculptures, and there were three small doorways leading to the nave and the side aisles. But a big horseshoe window above

the central doorway admitted a volume of light which illumined the *Dāgoba* at the far end. When worshippers assembled in comparative darkness in the nave (central part) before the bright *Dāgoba* in front, the effect must have been very solemn and impressive.

There are many such Chaitya caves at Nāsik, Bhājā, Bedsā, Kārle and other places in the Bombay Presidency. The Kārle cave is unanimously regarded as the finest specimen, on account of the beauty of the sculptures on the front wall, the remarkable rows



PANEL ILLUSTRATING THE NATIVITY OF THE BUDDHA, NĀGĀRJUNIKOṆḌA

of pillars inside the hall, and the fine proportion of the different parts of the building.

In addition to the pillars inside these caves, we have also several free-standing pillars, as for example that at Besnagar which was dedicated as a *Garuḍadhvaja* by the Greek ambassador, Heliodoros. They are in many cases monoliths (in the case of rock-cut caves they are necessarily so) but they lack the wonderful polish, the fine proportions and the grand capitals which characterise the best pillars of Aśoka. In this respect there was undoubtedly a decline. But in sculptures and the construction of *stūpas* and caves there was wonderful progress. It is perfectly true that the fine figures of certain animals which we see on the pillars of Aśoka have no



CHAITYA CAVE, KĀRLE

parallel in subsequent times, but the loss is made up by the delineation of human figures and the evolution of the wonderful image of Buddha.

The Gupta Period (A.D. 320–600)[1]

With the Gupta period we enter upon the classical phase of Indian sculpture. By the efforts of centuries techniques of art were perfected, definite types were evolved, and ideals of beauty were formulated with precision. There was no more groping in the dark, and no more experiments. A thorough intelligent grasp of the true aims and essential principles of art, a highly developed aesthetic sense, and a masterly execution with steady hands produced those remarkable images which were to be the ideal and despair of the Indian artists of subsequent ages. The Gupta sculptures not only remained models of Indian art in all times to come, but they also served as such in the Indian colonies in the Far East. The sculptures of the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, Annam, Cambodia and even Celebes bear the indelible stamp of Gupta art.

The most important contribution of Gupta art is the evolution of the perfect types of divinities, both Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical. A large number of Buddha images have been unearthed at Sárnáth near Benares, and one of them is justly regarded as the finest in the whole of India. Stone and bronze images of Buddha have also been found at Mathurā and other places. The images of Śiva, Vishṇu and other Brāhmaṇical gods are sculptured in some of the finest panels of the Deogarh temple (Jhansi district) and also occur elsewhere. These images are the best products of Indian art. They present a beautiful figure, full of charm and dignity, a graceful pose and a radiant spiritual expression. In general, a sublime idealism, combined with a highly-developed sense of rhythm and beauty, characterises the Gupta sculptures, and there are vigour and refinement in their design and execution. The intellectual element dominates Gupta art and keeps under control the highly-developed emotional display and the exuberance of decorative elements which characterise the art of succeeding ages.

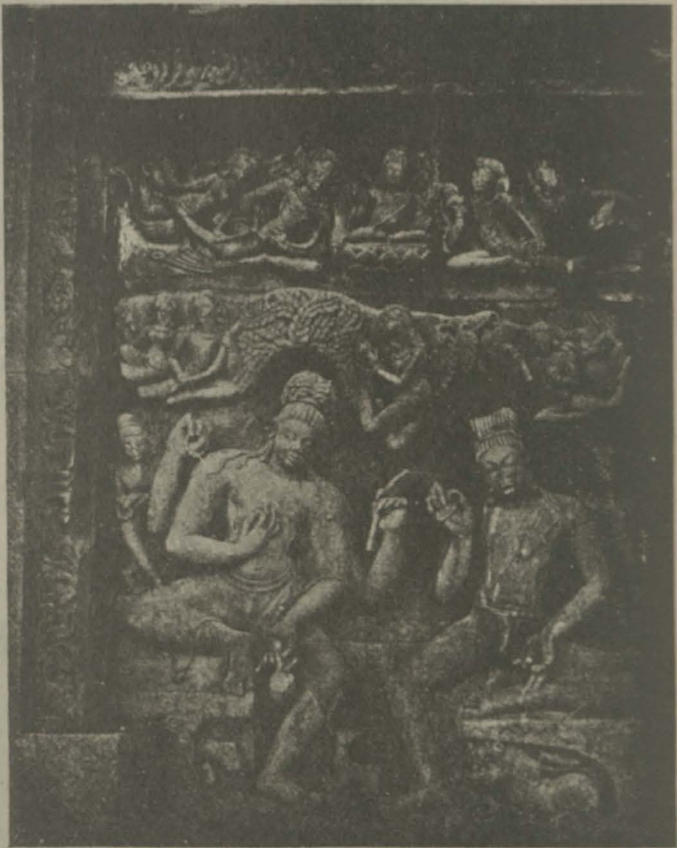
The art of casting metals reached a degree of development which may well be regarded as wonderful. Hiuen Tsang saw at

[1] Although the political supremacy of the Imperial Guptas did not last much beyond A.D. 495, the style of art ushered in by them continued till A.D. 600 or even somewhat later. Hence the title "Gupta period" in relation to art covers a much longer period than what would be understood in political history.



GARUḌA PILLAR, BESNAGAR

Nālandā a copper image of Buddha, about 80 feet high. The Bronze Buddha, found at Sultānganj, is 7½ feet high and is a fine piece of sculpture. The Iron Pillar of Delhi, near the Qutb Minār, is a marvellous work belonging to the early Gupta period. A century



By courtesy of the Indian Museum, Calcutta

NARA-NĀRĀYANA, DEOGARH TEMPLE

ago, it would have been difficult, even for the best European foundry, to manufacture a similar piece made of wrought iron.

The art of painting reached its height of glory and splendour in this age. The fine fresco-paintings on the walls and ceilings of the Ajantā Caves have extorted the unstinted admiration of the

whole world. Of the twenty-nine caves, sixteen contained paintings which survived, to a greater or less extent, even as late as 1879. Most of these, it is sad to think, have been destroyed, and the rest are also gradually crumbling to dust. Although some are as old as the first century A.D., most of them belong to the Gupta Age. A fine conception, brilliant colour, and admirable drawing invested these paintings with a unique charm which we can only faintly realise in their present ruined condition. In addition to decorative designs "as varied and graceful as they are fanciful" and "executed with masterly skill", they depict sacred objects and symbols, the figures of Buddha, and the incidents of his life (including past lives described in the *Jātaka* stories). Those known as "The Dying Princess", "The Mother and Child", etc., have won the highest admiration. The fresco-paintings at Sīgiriya in Ceylon, executed towards the close of the fifth century A.D., show a close resemblance to those of Ajantā and are in a better state of preservation. Some fresco paintings of high merit also adorn the caves at Bāgh.

Compared with sculpture, Gupta architecture, to judge by the extant remains, must be regarded as poor. The stone temple at Sāñchī, like that at Deogarh, is very small, but exhibits refinement in style. The brick temple at Bhītargāon is large but ruined. Remains of stone temples of this period have also been found at Nachna-ke-Talai and other places. These temples are well-designed, and consist of a square chamber, a cella (shrine), and a portico or veranda as essential elements. They are decorated with fine sculptured panels, but the decoration is properly subordinated to, and is in full harmony with, the architectural plan of the buildings. There is no doubt that magnificent temples of large dimensions were constructed during the Gupta age, but they have been completely destroyed. High and elaborately-worked towers (*śikharas*) which surmounted the roofs of temples in later ages, had not yet made their appearance, but the beginnings of this development are seen in the Bhītargāon temple and the miniature representations of temples on relief-sculptures of the Gupta period.

The artistic excellence of the Gupta period also found expression in the rich variety of gold coins issued by the wealthiest and mightiest monarchs of the age. According to some scholars, foreign influence is clearly traceable in this series, but the engravers who produced them were no mere imitators of the work of others. They gave free and spontaneous expression to their own ideas, and skilfully assimilated alien models with their own national tradition. The masterly execution of these coins is only matched by the elegance of their design, and they are justly regarded as among the finest examples of Indian art.

The Medieval Period (A.D. 600–1200)

During the six hundred years that followed the Gupta age, architecture gradually assumed the more important rôle in the evolution of Indian art. It was during this age that the different styles of architecture were evolved and led to the construction of the magnificent temples which we see to-day all over India.

Broadly speaking, there were two important styles of architecture,—Indo-Aryan or North-Indian, and Dravidian or South-Indian. The difference lies mainly in the shape of the *śikhara* or the high tower-like superstructure which now almost universally surmounts the cella or the shrine containing the image of the deity. The North Indian *śikhara* (see illustration on p. 245) has the appearance of a solid mass of curvilinear tower, bulging in the middle and ending in almost a point. The South Indian *śikhara* (see p. 249) looks like a pyramid made up of successive storeys each smaller than, and receding a little from, the one beneath it. This also ended in a small round piece of stone as its crowning member. Both types of *śikharas* were minutely carved with decorative sculptures.

There is another essential difference between the two styles of architecture. In South Indian temples pillars play an important part while they are altogether absent in edifices constructed in the North Indian style.

North India

Temples with curvilinear *śikharas* are found all over Northern India, and there are large groups of them at Bhuvanesvar in Orissa, and Khajurāho in the State of Chattarpur in Central India. Many of these temples are covered with sculpture from top to bottom, and present a grand and magnificent appearance. Infinite charm and variety are introduced in the *śikhara* by suitable modification of forms and application of sculptures, without destroying its essential characteristics. In the Khajurāho temples, as in most later examples, miniature *śikharas* are used as decorative ornaments on the body of the *śikhara* (see p. 246), and, in course of time, these decorative *śikharas* are developed into small independent *śikharas*, round about the central one.

It is impossible to describe in detail any one of these temples. The Lingarāja temple and the Rājarānī temple at Bhuvanesvar, and some of the temples erected by the Chandella kings at Khajurāho, may be regarded as the finest specimens of earlier and later types. The temple of Jagannāth at Purī, though more famous,

is less beautiful. There are also a good many fine temples in Rājputāna.

In addition to the normal type, independent styles were developed in certain localities, notably Kāshmīr and Rājputāna. The Mārtand temple is a good specimen of the former. As to the latter, the two temples at Dilāvarā on Mount Abu deserve special mention. They are small in dimension and not crowned by *śikharas*. But the dome which covers the shrine and the pillars of the *maṇḍapa* in front are worked with an elegance and refinement which defy all descrip-



E.N.A.

LINGARĀJA TEMPLE, BHUVANESVAR

tion. The hard stone is worked as if it were a fragile substance like paper. The rich exuberance of their decoration displays almost superhuman skill and entitles them to rank as priceless treasures of art. One of these was erected by a minister or governor named Vimala Shā in A.D. 1032 and the other by Tejaḥpāla in A.D. 1231.

South India

The history of architecture and sculpture in the South Indian Peninsula begins with the Pallava temples, and here, for the first

time, we meet with the Dravidian style. In addition to the temples in the capital city, Kāñchī or Conjeeveram, and other places, some of the rock-cut temples, known as the seven Pagodas

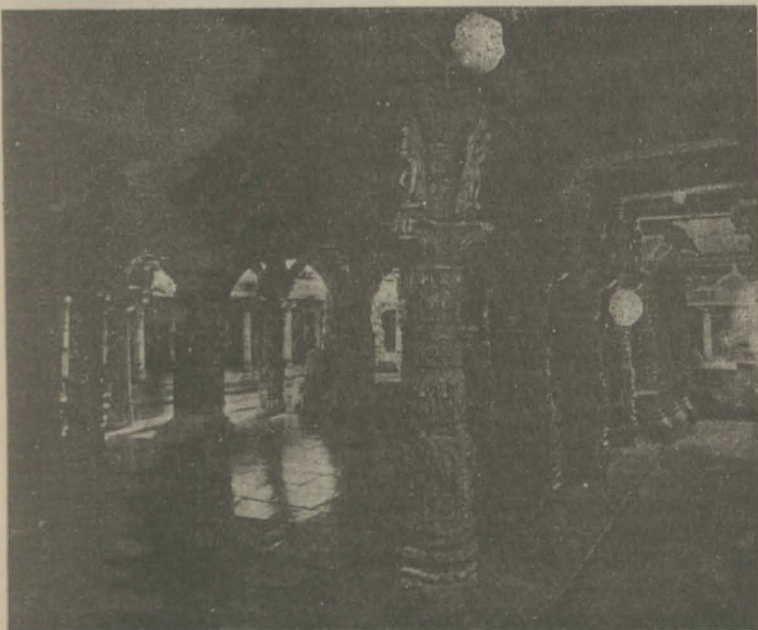


Photo, Johnston & Hoffmann

MAHĀDEVA TEMPLE, KHAJURĀHO

or *Rathas* of Māmallapuram, are built in this style which may therefore be justly called the Pallava style. The latter are small temples, each of which is cut out of a single big rock-boulder. They lie near the sea-beach and adorned the town called Māmallapuram or Mahābalipuram, founded by the great Pallava

king, Narasiṁhavarman (seventh century A.D.) It is now an insignificant place, and its only attraction is provided by these wonderful monolithic temples and a series of fine sculptures on rock-walls (see p. 248). The temples or pagodas are named after the five Pāṇḍava brothers and their common spouse Draupadī (Dharmarājarath, Bhīm-ratha, Draupadī-ratha, etc.). These monolithic temples, wrought out of massive stone, are complete with all the details of an ordinary temple and stand to-day as an undying



TEJAḤPĀLA'S TEMPLE, MOUNT ABU

testimony to the superb quality of Pallava art. Among the sculptures, one large composition has obtained great celebrity. The scene represented is usually described as the penance of Arjuna, but this is very doubtful. There are also many rock-cut caves belonging to the Pallava period.

It is important to note that the earliest specimens of Pallava art already exhibit a fairly advanced stage of development. Although we have no remains of an earlier epoch, we must presume its existence. For the men who built the temples at Kāñchī or Māmallapuram, or wrought the sculptures on the rocks at the

latter place, were no novices in their art, and must have been trained in schools with art traditions of centuries and generations at their back. The problem is analogous to that offered by the finished art of the Maurya period, and its probable solution has been discussed above. But the theory that foreign artists were imported to do the work can hardly be maintained in this case. We must hold, therefore, that earlier artists mostly worked in wood or other perishable materials, and hence their work has



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ROCK-CUT SCULPTURE, MĀMALLAPURAM

entirely disappeared, though chance or luck might some day restore a few relics of it.

The style of Pallava architecture not only set the standard in the South Indian Peninsula, but also largely influenced the architecture of the Indian colonies in the Far East. The characteristic Pallava or Dravidian type of *śikhara* is met with in the temples of Java, Cambodia and Annam. But there are important differences between them and the South Indian temples. The pillars which form such an important adjunct to the latter are altogether absent in the former.

The Cholas who supplanted the Pallavas in South India were mighty builders. The Dravidian style was developed and almost

perfected under them. Perhaps the best example of this style is furnished by the great Śaiva temple at Tanjore built by Rājarāja the Great. The great *śikhara*, consisting of fourteen storeys, rises to a height of 190 feet and is crowned by a massive dome consisting of a



E.N.A.

TANJORE TEMPLE

single block of stone. It is said that this huge block was carried to the immense height by being rolled along an inclined road, about four miles long, specially built for this purpose. The massive building is covered from the base to the top with sculptures and decorative mouldings. It occupies the centre of a courtyard with other

subsidiary chapels, but the whole area is dominated by the high tower over the shrine which is a conspicuous landmark in the locality.

There was another massive temple at Gangaikoṇḍa-cholapuram, the new capital city built by Rājendra Chola in the Trichinopoly district. The city was also adorned with a magnificent palace and a vast artificial lake, with stone embankment, more than fifteen miles long. All these are now in ruins.

Chola art is characterised by a massive grandeur. The huge structures were decorated with minute sculptures involving immense labour and infinite pains. As Fergusson very aptly remarked, the Chola artists conceived like giants and finished like jewellers.

A new development was slowly taking place in Chola art which was destined to modify Dravidian architecture in later times. This was the addition of a huge gateway, called a *Gopuram*, to the enclosure of the temple. Gradually, the Gopurams came to be multiplied and assumed huge proportions, being composed, like the temple itself, of a large number of superimposed storeys. Ultimately the gigantic Gopurams, sometimes large in number, came to occupy the dominant place by their towering height and lavish decoration, while the central shrine, being far less imposing, was reduced to comparative insignificance. The Gopuram at Kumbhakonam, for example, is a very splendid piece of work, by itself, but it so completely overshadows the main shrine that the structure, taken as a whole, is less pleasing and produces far less artistic effect than might have been reasonably expected.

There are many massive temples in South India, built in the same style. In addition to Gopurams, pillared halls and long colonnades were added as new features in the later temples. Modern travellers are struck with awe by the sight of the gigantic temples at Madurā, Śrīrangam, Rāmeśvaram, and other places, with successive enclosures, long courts with a bewildering maze of buildings, thousand-pillared halls, and long vistas of covered colonnades which seem to fade into the distance. But most of these temples are of a much later period.

The Upper Deccan

Between North India and the Far South, which had evolved two independent styles of architecture, lay the Deccan plateau where both the styles were in use. The Chalukyas and the Rāshṭrakūṭas who ruled in this region were great builders. Near the Chalukya capital, Bādāmi, we find a number of cave-temples which are dedicated to Brāhmaṇical gods, and contain a number of fine

images and good sculptures. There are also many stone temples at Bādāmi and various other places constructed in the ordinary way. Most of these show the Pallava or Dravidian style. The same style was also largely adopted by the Rāshṭrakūṭas, and the world-famous Kailāsa Temple at Ellorā is a marvellous specimen of the Dravidian style. It was constructed during the reign of Kṛishṇa I, in the latter half of the eighth century A.D. The process of construction employed in the case of the Māmallapuram *Rathas* was repeated here on a much bigger scale. An entire hillside was first demarcated and separated from a long range of mountains; and then a huge temple was cut out of it in the same way as each *Ratha* at Māmallapuram was cut out of a rock-boulder. The big temple, standing in an open court, now appears like an ordinary one, but it is merely the remnant of a solid mass of stone that once formed a part of the hill which now surrounds the temple on three sides.

The temple has a Dravidian *śikhara* and is elaborately carved with fine sculptures. Caves, excavated in the sides of the hills round it, contain big halls decorated with finely wrought pillars and images of various Brāhmaṇical divinities. The Kailāsa temple at Ellorā is a splendid achievement of art, and considering the technical skill and labour involved, is unequalled in the history of the world.

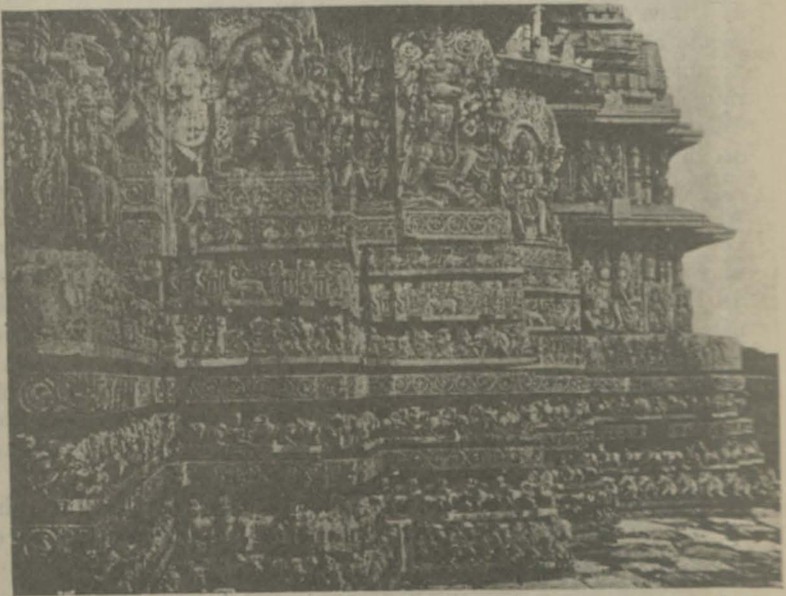
The hill at Ellorā contains a number of rock-cut caves within a short distance of the famous temple. The caves generally resemble those of the earlier period at Nāsik and Kārle, but the *façade* of the Viśvakarmā cave shows a pleasing modification.

The caves on the island of Elephanta, near Bombay, are also renowned and contain a number of large and remarkable images of Brāhmaṇical gods.

The Mysore Plateau

The Hoysalas who succeeded the later Chalukyas and ruled over the Mysore plateau in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D. evolved a new style of architecture. They perhaps inherited the art-traditions of their predecessors, the Gaṅgas, during whose rule the famous colossal Jaina image of Gomata was constructed by Chāmunda Ray, a minister, in about A.D. 983. The statue, placed on the top of a hillock at Śravaṇa Belgola, is more than 56 feet high, i.e. about ten times the size of a human being. It is wrought out of a single block of stone of the hardest species. In boldness of conception and difficulty of execution, it has perhaps no rival among the sculptures of the world.

The Hoysalas displayed the same qualities, though in a different way, in the construction of their temples. These temples are not square but polygonal or star-shaped. The essential characteristics of these temples are the high bases or plinths which follow all the windings of the temple and thus offer a huge length of vacant space to be elaborately carved with sculptures. The *śikhara* is pyramidal but low, and may be regarded as a modified type of the Dravidian. The best-known example of the Hoysala style is the famous Hoysaleśvara temple at Halebid or Dorasamudra. It



E.N.A.

HOYSALEŚVARA TEMPLE, HALEBID

stands on a terrace, about five or six feet high, paved with stone slabs. The entire height is covered with a succession of eleven running friezes of elephants, tigers, scrolls, horsemen, and celestial beasts and birds. Each frieze has a length of 700 feet or more, and the entire surface is covered with sculptures. The lowest frieze, for example, contains no less than two thousand elephants finely executed, and most of them with riders and trappings. Similar elaboration of decoration is found in the remaining ten friezes. The Hoysaleśvara temple contains, as has been aptly remarked, "one of the most marvellous exhibitions of human labour to be found even in the patient East".

Medieval Sculptures

The medieval sculptures may best be studied with reference to the temples which they adorn. There were, besides, isolated images of gods and goddesses, in considerable numbers. There were many local schools with distinctive characteristics, fostered by different ruling dynasties (e.g. Pālas, Senas, Chandellas, Kalachuris). It is neither possible nor necessary to refer in detail to these numerous schools spread all over India. The medieval sculptures are gradually dominated more and more by religious influence and less by aesthetic ideas. Sometimes they seem ugly and even horrible to the modern eye, though they represent faithfully some religious concept. The conception of Naṭarāja Śiva is one of the few valuable contributions of medieval art, especially in South India. In North India we come across both Buddhist and Brāmaṇical images of a fairly high standard, but there is hardly any original conception. In the later period they are influenced by Tāntrik ideas which are not always very pleasing to the modern taste.

Art in ancient India has in the main been a handmaid of religion. It has ordinarily expressed the prevailing religious faiths and beliefs, and spiritual conceptions and emotions. To understand and appreciate it properly one must have a thorough understanding of the different phases of religious evolution. In earlier periods, however, there was more of really artistic spirit, and the religious ideas were also more compatible with modern aesthetic taste. Gradually there was a decline in artistic feeling and the artists were mere mechanical instruments in rendering, to order, the later concepts of religion.

Conclusion

A review of the progress and development of Indian art, such as we have attempted above, is necessary for the proper understanding of the high culture and refinement of the ancient Indians. For true art is an unerring expression of mind, and a national art is a true reflex of national character. Great nations of the world have left behind them unmistakable evidence of their greatness in their works of art. The nature and excellence of art constitute a sure means by which we can understand the essential characteristics of a nation and make a fair estimate of its greatness. Judged by the standard of art, Indian civilisation must be regarded as occupying a very high place indeed among those of antiquity. It exhibits not only grace and refinement but technical skill and patient industry of a very high order. Taken in a mass, Indian

art offers the most vivid testimony to the wonderful resources in men and money possessed by the rulers, and the religious spirit, occasionally reaching to a sublime height, that dominated the entire population. It shows, as the national ideal, the subordination of ideas of physical beauty and material comfort to ethical conceptions and spiritual bliss. Amid the luxuries and comforts of worldly life, the thought of the world beyond never ceased to exercise a dominant influence. The changes in spiritual ideas and ideals, from the sublime purity of early Buddhism to the less pleasing forms of the Tāntrik cult, are also reflected in art. A more detailed study of the subject is beyond the scope of the present work, but its meaning and significance for the correct interpretation of ancient Indian life must be clearly grasped by every student of History.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES TO PART I

THE MAURYAS

Chandragupta Priyadarsana
- Bindusāra Amitraghāta
  - Sushima (Sumana)
    - Nigrodha
  - Aśokavardhana Priyadarśin
    - Mahendra
    - Sanghamitrā
    - Chārumatī
    - Kunāla (Dharmavivardhana, Suyasas)
      - Bandhupālita (Dasaratha?)
      - Samprati
        Śāliśūka
        Devadharma (-Varman)
        Satamdhanus
        Bṛihadratha
      - Vigatasoka
        - Vīrasena (Gandhāra)
          Subhagasena
    - Jalauka (Kashmir)
    - Tīvara
  - Vigataśoka (? Tissa)

THE EARLY GUPTAS

Gupta
- Ghatotkacha
  - Chandra Gupta I = Kumāradevī (Lichchhavi)
    - Samudra Gupta (Parākramāṅka; Śrī Vikrama?)
      - Chandra Gupta II (Vikramāditya) (Deva Gupta)
        - Govinda Gupta (Tirhut)
        - Kumāra Gupta I (Mahendrāditya)
          - Skanda Gupta (Vikramāditya)
          - Puru Gupta (Śrī Vikrama)
            - Narasiṁha Gupta (Bālāditya)
              - Kumāra Gupta II (Kramāditya)
                - Vishṇu Gupta
            - Budha Gupta
          - Ghatotkacha Gupta (?) (Tumain)
        - Prabhāvatī (Queen of the Vākātakas)

HOUSE OF PUSHYABHŪTI

- Naravardhana (Thānesar)
  - Rājyavardhana I
    - Ādityavardhana
      - Prabhākaravardhana
        - Rājyavardhana II
        - Harshavardhana (Silāditya) (Thanesar and Kanauj)
          - daughter = Dhruvasena II (Dhruvabhata Bālāditya) (Valabhi)
            - Dharasena IV (Valabhi)
        - Rājyaśrī (Queen of the Maukharis)

THE IMPERIAL PRATIHĀRAS

- Unnamed ancestor (claiming descent from Lakshmaṇa of the Raghu family)
  - Nāgabhata I
  - Name not known
    - Kākustha
    - Devarāja (Devaśakti)
      - Vatsarāja
        - Nāgabhata II (Maru, Kanauj, etc.)
          - Rāmabhadra (Rāmadeva)
            - Bhoja I (Mihira, Prabhāsa, Ādivarāha) (Kanauj)
              - Yuvarāja Nāgabhata
              - Mahendrapāla I (Mahendrāyudha Nirbhayarāja, Bhāka)
                - Mahīpāla I (Kshitipāla ?)
                  - Devapāla (?)
                    - Mahīpāla II (?)
                  - Vijayapāla (?)
                    - Rājyapāla (?) (Kanauj and Bari)
                      - Trilochanapāla (?) (Bari)
                        - Yasahpāla (?)
                - Bhoja II
                - Vināyakapāla (Harsha)
                  - Mahendrapāla II

THE PĀLAS OF BENGAL AND THE GĀHADAVĀLAS

- Dayitavishṇu
  - Śrī Vapyaṭa
    - Gopāla I
      - Dharmapāla
        - Tribhuvanapāla
        - Devapāla
          - Rājyapāla
      - Vākpāla
        - Jayapāla
          - Vigrahapāla I (Śūrapāla I)
            - Nārāyaṇapāla
              - Rājyapāla
                - Gopāla II
                  - Vigrahapāla II
                    - Mahīpāla I
                      - Nayapāla
                        - girl = Vigrahapala III = Yauvanaśrī
                          - Mahīpāla II
                          - Surapāla II
                          - Rāmapāla
                            - Rājyapala
                            - Vittapala
                            - Kumārapala
                              - Gopāla
                            - Madanapāla

- Lakshmi-Karṇa(Chedi)
  - Yauvanaśrī
  - Vīraśrī = Jātavarman (parts of E. India)

- Mahana (brother of the girl who married Vigrahapala III)
  - Devarakshita = Sankaradevī (Sankaradevī was Mahana's daughter; Devarakshita: S.Bihar)
    - Kumāradevi

- Yaśovigraha (Gāhadavāla)
  - Mahīchandra
    - Chandradeva (Kanauj and Benares)
      - Madanapāla
        - Govindachandra = Kumāradevi
          - Vijayachandra
            - Jayachchandra
              - Hariśchandra
              - ? Samyuktā = Prithvīrāja III

THE SENAS OF BENGAL

Vīra Sena (ancestor)
⋮
Sāmanta Sena (Rāḍhā or West Bengal)
|
Hemanta Sena
|
Vijaya Sena (Bengal)
|
Ballāla Sena
|
Lakshmana Sena
- Viśvarūpa Sena
  - ? Princes Sūryya Sena and Purushottama Sena
- Keśava Sena (Lakhmanya pisar Rai Lakhman of the Tabakat-i-Akbari?)

EARLY CHALUKYA KINGS

Jayasiṁha I
|
Raṇarāga
|
1. Pulakeśin I, A.D. 543–44
   - 2. Kīrttivarman I, A.D. 566–c. 597
     - 4. Pulakeśin II, c. A.D. 609–642
       - Chandrāditya
       - Ādityavarman
       - 5. Vikramāditya I 'Raṇarasika' A.D. 655–680
         - 6. Vinayāditya A.D. 680–696
           - 7. Vijayāditya A.D. 696–733
             - 8. Vikramāditya II A.D. 733–746
               - 9. Kīrttivarman II A.D. 746–757
             - Bhīma I
       - Jayasiṁha (Lāṭa branch)
     - Kubja Vishṇuvardhana 'Vishama-Siddhi'. Founded the Eastern Chalukya Dynasty of Pishṭapura and Veṅgī.
     - Jayasiṁha 'Dharāśraya'
       - Nāgavardhana (Nāsik branch)
   - 3. Maṅgaleśa, c. A.D. 597–608

EASTERN CHALUKYA DYNASTY

- 1\. Kubja Vishṇuvardhana I, Brother of early Chalukya king Pulakeśin II
  - 2\. Jayasiṁha I
  - 3\. Indra-Bhaṭṭāraka
    - 4\. Vishṇuvardhana II
      - 5\. Maṅgi-Yuvarāja
        - 6\. Jayasiṁha II
        - 8\. Vishṇuvardhana III
          - 9\. Vijayāditya I
            - 10\. Vishṇuvardhana IV
              - 11\. Vijayāditya II Narendra-mṛiga-rāja
                - 12\. Kali-Vishṇuvardhana V
                  - 13\. Guṇaka-Vijayāditya III
                  - Vikramāditya I (Yuva-rāja)
                    - 14\. Chālukya-Bhīma I 'Drohārjuna'. Coronation A.D. 892
                      - 15\. Vijayāditya IV
                        - 16\. Amma I 'Vishṇuvardhana VI' 'Rājamahendra'
                          - 17\. Beta Vijayāditya V
                          - 20\. Bhīma II
                        - 22\. Chālukya-Bhīma III
                          - 24\. Dānārṇava
                            - 25\. Śaktivarman
                            - 26\. Vimalāditya (Md. Kundavvā, dau. of Rājarāja Chola I) A.D. 1011–1022
                              - 27\. Rājarāja Narendra I, Md. Ammangā-devī, dau. of Rājendra Chola I. 1022–1063
                                - 28\. Rājendra III, United the E. Chalukya and Chola crowns and reigned as Kulottuṅga Chola I, 1070–1122. Md. Madurāntaki, dau. of Rājendradeva II Chola.
                              - Vijayāditya VII, Viceroy of Veṅgī
                          - 23^{a}. Amma II 'Vijayāditya VI', 'Rāja-mahendra' A.D. 945–970
                      - 19\. Vikramāditya II
                  - Yudhamalla I
                    - 18\. Tārapa, Tāḍapa, or Tāla I
                      - 21\. Yuddhamalla II
                        - 23_{b} Bāḍapa
                        - Tāla II 'Vishṇuvardhana
              - Nṛipa-Rudra
        - 7\. Kokkili

THE RĀSHṬRAKŪṬA DYNASTY

- Dantivarman I
  - Indra I
    - Govinda I
      - Karka, or Kakka I
        - Indra II (Md. a Chalukya princess)
          - Dantidurga (Dantivarman II) 'Vairamegha', 'Khadgāvaloka'. A.D. 754
        - Kṛishṇa I 'Akālavarsha', 'Śubhatuṅga'. A.D. 768–772. Constructed the Kailāsa rock-cut temple at Ellorā
          - Govinda II
          - Dhruva
            - Kamba 'Stambha', 'Raṇāvaloka'
            - Govinda III 793–814
              - Nṛipatuṅga Amoghavarsha I or 'Śarva' 814–877
                - Krishṇa II 877–913 Md. dau. of Kokkalla the Chedi or Kalachuri king.
                  - Jagattuṅga Md. Lakshmī, a Kalachuri princess
                    - Indra III. 915–927 Md. Vijāmbā, a Kalachuri princess
                      - Amoghavarsha II Ruled 1 year, and deposed by his brother
                      - Govinda IV Sāhasāṅka 918–934
                    - Vaddiga, or Amoghavarsha III c. 934–939. Md. Kundakā
                      - Dau. Revakā Md. W. Gaṅga King Butuga II
                      - Krishṇa III 939–968
                        - a son
                          - Indra IV (died 982)
                      - Khottiga 968–972
                      - Nirupama
                        - Kakkala or Karka II or Amoghavarsha IV 972–973
                - Dau: Śaṅkhā Md. the Pallava king Nandivarman III
            - Indra (Lāta branch)
        - Nanna
          - Śaṅkaragaṇa 793

CHĀLUKYA ḌYNASTY OF KALYĀNA

Vijayāditya (696–733)
|
Bhīma I
|
Kīrttivarman III
|
Tailapa, or Taila I
|
Vikramāditya III
|
Bhīma II
|
Ayyana I
|
Vikramāditya IV
Md. Bonthādevi, dau. of the Chedi king Lakshmaṇa
|
1. Tailapa or Taila II. 'Āhavamalla'.
Md. Jākavve, dau. of a Rāshṭrakūṭa king. A.D. 973–997

Children of 1. Tailapa II:
- 2. Satyāsraya, Irivabedaṅga. A.D. 997–1008
- Daśavarman or Yaśovarman

Children of Daśavarman:
- 3. Vikramāditya V A.D. 1008–1014
- 4. Ayyana II 1014–1015
- 5. Jayasiṁha II 'Jagadekamalla' A.D. 1015–1042

Children of 5. Jayasiṁha II:
- 6. Someśvara I 'Āhavamalla' A.D. 1042–1068
- Dau. Hanmā or Āvallā-devī Md. Yādava Chief Bhillama III of Seuna-deśa

Children of 6. Someśvara I:
- 7. Someśvara II 'Bhuvanaikamalla' 1068–1076
- 8. Vikramāditya VI 'Tribhuvanamalla' 1076–1127
- Jayasiṁha
- Vishṇuvardhana Vijayāditya

Children of 8. Vikramāditya VI:
- Jayakarṇa 'Trailokyamalla'
- 9. Someśvara III 'Bhulokamalla' 1127–1138
- Dau. Mailāla-devī. Md. Jayakeśin II of the Kadambas of Goa.

Children of 9. Someśvara III:
- 10. Perma, Jagadekamalla II 1138–1151
- 11. Tailapa III 'Nurmadi Taila', 'Trailokyamalla' 1151–1156. Died 1163
  |
  12. Someśvara IV 'Tribhuvanamalla' 1184–1200

PALLAVA KINGS

Siṁhavarman IV
|
Vishṇugopa III
|
Siṁhavarman V
|

- Siṁhavishṇu
  - Mahendravarman I
  - Narasiṁhavarman I c. 642–668
  - Mahendravarman II
  - Parameśvaravarman I c. 674
  - Narasiṁhavarman II
    - Parameśvaravarman II
    - Mahendravarman III
- Bhīmavarman
  - Buddhavarman
  - Ādityavarman
  - Govindavarman
  - Hiraṇyavarman
  - Nandivarman II
    Ruled for at least 65 years in the eighth century
  - Dantivarman
    Vanquished by Rāshṭrakūṭa Govinda III (793–814)
  - Nandivarman III (Kampa?)
    Md. Śaṅkhā, dau. of Rāshṭrakūṭa Amoghavarsha I
  - Nṛipatuṅga

Aparājita
Crushed by the Chola King Āditya I in the last quarter of the ninth century A.D.

CHOLA KINGS

- Vijayālaya, Seized Tanjore. c. 846–871
  - Āditya I, c. 871–907
    - Parāntaka I, A.D. 907–953
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PART II

MEDIEVAL INDIA

Book I

THE MUSLIM CONQUEST AND THE DELHI SULTĀNATE

CHAPTER I

THE ADVENT OF THE MUSLIMS

The Arabs in Sind

WE have seen in a previous chapter how the Arabs, roused to energy and enthusiasm by a new creed, effected the conquest of Sind and carried on operations in some of the neighbouring provinces.

With the decline of the Caliphs or Khalifahs of Baghdād, supreme leaders and rulers of the greater part of the Islamic world, the Muslim governor of Sind became virtually independent. In A.D. 871 the Khalifah practically handed over the province to the famous Saffarid leader, Ya'qūb-ibn-Lais. On the latter's death, the Muslim territories in Sind were divided between two independent chiefs, those of Mansurah (near Bahmanābād) and Multān. Neither of these ever attained to great power, and both had to live in constant dread of their Indian neighbours, particularly the Imperial Pratihāras of Kanauj.

The Arab conquest of Sind did not immediately produce any far-reaching political effect, and it has been described by Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole as "an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results". But it is significant from the cultural point of view. Besides helping the exchange of ideas, it facilitated the dissemination of the seeds of Indian culture in foreign lands. The Arabs acquired from the Hindus some new knowledge in Indian Religion, Philosophy, Medicine, Mathematics, Astronomy and Folklore, and carried it not only to their own land but also to Europe. We know definitely from Mas'ūdī and Ibn Hauqal that Arab settlers lived side by side with their Hindu fellow-citizens for many years on terms of amity and peace, and Amīr Khusrav mentions that the Arab astronomer Abū Ma'shar came to Benares and studied astronomy there for ten years.

The Ghaznavids : Sultān Mahmūd

From the political point of view, the conquest of the Punjab by the Sultāns of Ghaznī, to which reference has already been

made, was of far greater importance than the establishment of Arab principalities in the lower Indus valley.

Sultān Mahmūd, who carried to fruition the policy of his father, Sabuktigīn, was undoubtedly one of the greatest military leaders the world has ever seen. His cool courage, prudence, resourcefulness and other qualities make him one of the most interesting personalities in Asiatic history. In addition to his victorious expeditions in India he had to his credit two memorable campaigns against hostile Turks in the course of which he routed the hosts of Ilak Khān and the Seljuqs. Great as a warrior, the Sultān was no less eminent as a patron of arts and letters.

But in spite of all this, to the historian of India he appears mainly as an insatiable invader. He was neither a missionary for the propagation of religion in this country nor an architect of empire. The main object of his eastern expeditions seems to have been the acquisition of the "wealth of Ind" and the destruction of the morale of its custodians. The annexation of the Punjab was a measure of necessity rather than of choice. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that his invasions had no permanent political results in India. He drained the wealth of the country and despoiled it of its military resources to an appalling extent. The Ghaznavid occupation of the Punjab served as the key to unlock the gates of the Indian interior. Big cracks were made in the great fabric of Indian polity, and it was no longer a question of whether but when that age-old structure would fall. Neither the Arabs nor the Ghaznavid (Yamīnī) Turks succeeded in adding India to the growing empire of Islam, but they paved the way for that final struggle which overwhelmed the Gangetic kingdoms some two hundred years later.

Muhammad of Ghūr

The empire of Ghaznī began to fall to pieces under the later successors of Sultān Mahmūd, who were too feeble to maintain their position at Ghaznī and in North-West India in the face of the rising power of the princes of Ghūr, a small obscure principality in the mountainous region of Afghānistān to the south-east of Herat. The petty chiefs of Ghūr, of eastern Persian extraction, were originally feudatories of Ghaznī, but, taking advantage of the weakness of their suzerains, they steadily rose to power and entered into a contest with them for supremacy. In the course of this contest, Qutb-ud-dīn Muhammad of Ghūr, and his brother Saif-ud-dīn, were cruelly executed by Bahrām Shāh of Ghaznī.

'Alā-ud-dīn Husain, a brother of the victims, took a terrible revenge on Ghaznī by sacking the city and giving it to the flames for seven days and nights. This action earned for 'Alā-ud-dīn the title of *Jahānsūz*, "the world-burner". Bahrām's son and feeble successor, Khusrav Shāh, was driven from Ghaznī by a horde of the Ghuzz tribe of Turkmāns and fled to the Punjab, then the sole remnant of the wide dominions of his ancestors. Ghaznī remained in possession of the Ghuzz Turkmāns for about ten years, after which it was occupied by the princes of Ghūr. Saif-ud-dīn Muhammad, son and successor of the "world-burner", was killed in fighting against the Ghuzz Turkmāns; but his cousin and successor, Ghiyās-ud-dīn Muhammad, drove the Ghuzz Turkmāns from Ghaznī in 1173 and appointed his younger brother, Shihāb-ud-dīn, also known as Mu'iz-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Sām or popularly called Muhammad of Ghūr, governor of that province. Very cordial relations existed between the two brothers, and Muhammad of Ghūr began his Indian campaigns while still a lieutenant of his brother.

The first Indian expedition of Muhammad of Ghūr (A.D. 1175), directed against his co-religionists, the Ismā'īlan heretics of Multān, was attended with success, and he soon captured the strong fortress of Uch by a stratagem. But his invasion of Gujarāt in A.D. 1178 proved a failure; the *rājā* of Gujarāt inflicted a terrible defeat on him. Nevertheless, he occupied Peshāwār in the following year and established a fortress at Śiālkoṭ in A.D. 1181. By allying himself with Vijaya Dev, the *rājā* of Jammu, against Khusrav Malik, son and successor of Khusrav Shāh and the last representative of the dynasty of Sabuktigīn and Sultān Mahmūd, then in possession of Lahore only, he captured the Ghaznavid ruler and took him prisoner to Ghaznī. Thus disappeared the rule of the Ghaznavids in the Punjab. Its occupation by Muhammad of Ghūr opened the way for his further conquest of India, which, however, made inevitable a conflict with the Rājputs, particularly with his neighbour, Prithvirāj, the powerful Chauhān king of Ajmer and Delhi.

The political condition of Northern India had changed considerably since the days of Sultān Mahmūd. Though a part of Bihār was in the possession of the Buddhist Pālas, Bengal had passed under the control of the Hindu dynasty of the Senas. Bundelkhand remained under the rule of the Chandellas, but the Pratihāras in Kanauj were displaced by the Gāhaḍavālas. Delhi and Ajmer were under the Chauhāns. Jaichānd or Jayachchandra, the Gāhaḍavāla ruler of Kanauj, who lived mostly at Benares, was considered

by the Muslim writers to be the greatest king of India at the time: and, if Tod is to be believed, he was jealous of Prithvirāj's proud position. His beautiful daughter is said to have been carried away by the Chauhān hero, and the story of this romance has formed the theme of many of the bardic songs of the time. This is said to have added to the bitterness of their relations so that Jaichānd did not ally himself with Prithvirāj when Muhammad of Ghūr appeared on the scene. There is no reason, however, to believe that Jaichānd invited Muhammad of Ghūr to invade India. The invasion of this country was an almost inevitable corollary to Muhammad's complete victory over the Ghaznavids in the Punjab.

When, in the winter of 1190–1191, Muhammad of Ghūr marched beyond the Punjab, Prithvirāj, the bold and chivalrous hero of the Rājputs, who were in no way inferior in bravery and courage to the invaders, advanced to oppose him with a large army, including, according to Ferishta, 200,000 horse and 3,000 elephants. Prithvirāj had the support of many of his fellow Rājput princes, but Jaichānd held aloof. The Ghūrī invader stood in the middle of his army with two wings on both sides and met the Rājputs at Tarāin near Thānesar in A.D. 1191. Fighting with their usual vigour, the Rājputs greatly harassed the Muslim troops, who were soon overpowered, and their leader, being severely wounded, retired to Ghaznī. But Muhammad did not become disheartened at this initial failure. He soon raised a strong army with a view to avenging his defeat, and with adequate preparations, invaded India once again in 1192 and met his Rājput adversary on the same field. By superior tactics and generalship, the invading army inflicted a severe defeat on the Rājputs. Prithvirāj was captured and put to death, and his brother was also slain. This victory of Muhammad was decisive. It laid the foundation of Muslim dominion in Northern India; and the subsequent attempts of the relatives of Prithvirāj to recover their lost power proved to be of no avail. Different parts of Northern India were conquered in the course of a few years by Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak, the most faithful of Muhammad's Turkish officers, and Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad.

Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak was originally a slave of Turkestān. In his childhood he was brought by a merchant to Nīshāpūr, where its Qāzī, Fakhr-ud-dīn 'Abdul 'Azīz Kufi, purchased him and provided for his religious and military training along with his sons. After the Qāzī's death, he was sold by the Qāzī's sons to a merchant, who took him to Ghaznī, where he was purchased by Muhammad of Ghūr. Thus Qutb-ud-dīn began his career as a slave, and

the dynasty founded by him in India is known as the "Slave dynasty."[1]

Qutb-ud-dīn was "endowed with all laudable qualities and admirable impressions" though "he possessed no outward comeliness". His qualities gained for him the confidence of Muhammad of Ghūr, who soon raised him to the post of *Amīr-i-Ākhur* (Lord of the stables). He rendered valuable services to his master during his Indian expeditions, in recognition of which he was placed in charge of his Indian conquests after the second battle of Tarāin in 1192. He was left "untrammelled not only in his administration of the new conquests, but also in his discretion to extend them".

To strengthen his own position, Qutb-ud-dīn contracted matrimonial alliances with the powerful rival chiefs; thus while he himself married Tāj-ud-dīn Yildiz's daughter, his sister was married to Nāsir-ud-dīn Qabācha and his daughter to Iltutmish. Qutb-ud-dīn justified the confidence which his master had reposed in him. In 1192 he captured Hānsī, Meerut, Delhi, Ranthambhor and Koīl. In 1194 he helped his master in defeating and slaying Jaichānd, *rājā* of Benares and Kanauj, at Chandwār on the Jumnā in the Etāwah district. In 1197 he chastised Bhīmdev II of Gujarāt, for his having caused him some trouble, plundered his capital and returned to Delhi by way of Hānsī. In 1202 he besieged the fortress of Kālinjar in Bundelkhand, overpowered its defenders and captured vast booty from them. Fifty thousand people, male and female, were made prisoners. He next marched to the city of Mahoba, took possession of it and returned to Delhi by way of Badāūn, one of the richest cities of Hindustān, which also was occupied. Meanwhile, Bihār and a part of Western Bengal had been added to the empire of Ghūr by Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad, son of Bakhtiyār Khaljī, who had driven Lakshmaṇa Sena from Nadiā possibly to Eastern Bengal,[2] to a place near Dacca, where the Sena

[1] This description of Qutb-ud-dīn's dynasty is inaccurate. None but three kings (Qutb-ud-dīn, Iltutmish and Balban) of this dynasty were slaves, and even these three were manumitted by their masters. Qutb-ud-dīn received a letter of manumission and a canopy of state from Sultān Ghiyās-ud-dīn Mahmūd, the nephew and successor of his master, Muhammad of Ghūr, before his elevation to the throne of Delhi (Raverty, *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*, pp. 524–5); and Iltutmish was freed before his master (ibid., pp. 605–6). Balban, who belonged to the "forty Turkish slaves of Iltutmish", got his freedom along with them (Ziā Barnī, *Ta'rīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*). It is also incorrect to describe the dynasty as the "Pathān" or "Afghān" dynasty, because all these rulers were neither "Pathāns" nor "Afghāns" but Turks.

[2] Authorities differ in their opinions regarding the date of the capture of Nadiā by the Muslims. According to Raverty, it was effected in A.H. 590 = A.D. 1193 (op. cit., Vol. I, p. 588 f.n.) but this date was rejected

power survived for more than half a century, and had made Gaur or Lakhnautī, in the modern Māldah district, the seat of his government. Thus by the beginning of the thirteenth century, a considerable part of Hindustān, extending from the Indus in the west to the Ganges in the east, had been conquered by Muslim arms. But the consolidation of Muslim rule required a few years more.

On the death of his elder brother Ghiyās-ud-dīn Muhammad in February, 1203, Mu'iz-ud-dīn Muhammad became the ruler of Ghaznī, Ghūr and Delhi in name, which he had been so long in reality. But soon his position was endangered by some disasters. In 1205 he sustained a defeat near Andkhūī in Central Asia at the hands of 'Alā-ud-dīn Muhammad, the Shāh of Khwārazm, which dealt a severe blow at his military prestige in India and stirred up revolts and conspiracies in different parts of his kingdom. He was refused admittance to Ghaznī; Multān was seized by a Ghaznī officer, and his old enemies, the Khokars, created troubles in the Punjab. But with great zeal and promptitude, Mu'iz-ud-dīn Muhammad marched to India, suppressed the rebellions everywhere, and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Khokars in November, 1205. His days, however, were numbered. On his way from Lahore to Ghaznī, he was stabbed to death at Damyak on the 15th March, 1206, by a band of assassins whose identity has not been precisely determined. Some writers attribute the deed to the Khokars, who had been so recently deprived of their homes, while, according to others, he was killed by some Muslim enthusiasts of the Ismā'īlī sect. A legend of the Rājputs, mentioned also by a Muslim historian, attributes his death to their hero, Prithvirāj, who, according to it, had not been slain at the second battle of Tarāin but was blinded and remained a captive. The body of the murdered Sultān was taken to Ghaznī and buried there.

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by Blochmann with cogent arguments (*J.A.S.B.*, Pt. I, pp. 275–7). The views of Edward Thomas that Nadiā fell in A.H. 599 = A.D. 1202–1203 (*Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi*, p. 110) and of Charles Stewart (*History of Bengal*, p. 47) that it was captured in A.H. 600 = A.D. 1203–1204 are in conflict with the facts of contemporary history. A recent writer considers the theory of Blochmann that Nadiā was captured in A.H. 594–595 = A.D. 1197–1198, to be "the most plausible one" (*Indian Historical Quarterly*, March 1936, pp. 148–51).

CHAPTER II

THE SO-CALLED SLAVE DYNASTY AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF MUSLIM POWER IN NORTHERN INDIA

1. Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak and Ārām Shāh

MUHAMMAD of Ghūr left no male heirs to succeed him, and his provincial viceroys soon established their own authority in their respective jurisdictions. Tāj-ud-dīn Yildiz, Governor of Kirmān, ascended the throne of Ghaznī, while Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak assumed the title of Sultān and was acknowledged as the ruler of the Indian territories by the Muslim officers in India like Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn of Bengal and Nāsir-ud-dīn Qabācha, Governor of Multān and Uch. Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak's rise excited the jealousy of Tāj-ud-dīn Yildiz, who entered into a contest with him for the mastery over the Punjab. Qutb-ud-dīn defeated Yildiz, drove him out of Ghaznī and occupied it for forty days. But the people of Ghaznī, disgusted with his excesses, secretly invited Yildiz to come to their rescue. Yildiz did not fail to avail himself of this opportunity, and on his sudden and unexpected return to Ghaznī, Qutb-ud-dīn fled away precipitately. This destroyed the chance of a political union between Afghānistān and India, which was not achieved till Bābur's occupation of Delhi, and Qutb-ud-dīn became a purely Indian Sultān. He died at Lahore, early in November, A.D. 1210, in consequence of a fall from his horse while playing *Chaugān* or polo, after a short reign of a little more than four years.

Qutb-ud-dīn was, remarks Minhāj-us-Sirāj, a "high-spirited and open-hearted monarch". Endowed with intrepidity and martial prowess, he rarely lost a battle, and, by his extensive conquests, brought a large part of Hindustān under the banner of Islam. His "gifts were bestowed by hundreds of thousands"[1], and, for his unbounded generosity, he has been styled by all writers as *Lakh bakhsh*, or giver of lacs. Hasan-un-Nizāmī, the author of *Tāj-ul-Ma'āsir*, who is full of praise for Qutb-ud-dīn, writes that he "dispensed even-handed justice to the people, and exerted himself to promote the peace and prosperity of the realm". But the

[1] His contemporary, Lakshmaṇa Sena of Bengal, was also known for his lavish generosity.

Sultān felt no hesitation in having recourse to stern measures in his conquests and administration when necessary. His devotion to Islam was remarkable. Thus Hasan-un-Nizāmī remarks: "By his orders the precepts of Islam received great promulgation, and the sun of righteousness cast its shadow on the countries of Hind from the heaven of God's assistance." He gave proof of his zeal by building one mosque at Delhi and another at Ajmer.

On the sudden death of Qutb-ud-dīn at Lahore, the *Amīrs* and *Maliks* of Lahore set up Ārām Bakhsh as his successor with the title of Sultān Ārām Shāh, "for the sake of restraining tumult, for the tranquillity of the commonalty, and the content of the hearts of the soldiery". The relationship of Ārām with Qutb-ud-dīn is a subject of controversy. According to some, he was Qutb-ud-dīn's son, but Minhāj-us-Sirāj distinctly writes that Qutb-ud-dīn only had three daughters. Abul Fazl has made the "astonishing statement" that he was the Sultān's brother. A modern writer has hazarded the opinion that "he was no relation of Qutb-ud-dīn" but was selected as his successor as he was available on the spot.[1] In fact, there were no fixed rules governing the succession to the Crown in the Turkish State. It was determined largely by the exigencies of the moment and the influence of the chiefs and the nobles. Ārām was ill-qualified to govern a kingdom. The nobles of Delhi soon conspired against him and invited Malik Shams-ud-dīn Iltutmish, then Governor of Badāūn, to replace Ārām. Iltutmish responded to their call, and, advancing with all his army, defeated Ārām in the plain of Jūd near Delhi. What became of Ārām is not quite certain.

2. Iltutmish

Iltutmish belonged to the tribe of Ilbarī in Turkestān. He was remarkably handsome in appearance, and showed signs of intelligence and sagacity from his early days, which excited the jealousy of his brothers, who managed to deprive him of his paternal home and care. But adversity did not mar his qualities, which soon opened a career for him. His accomplishments attracted the notice of Qutb-ud-dīn, then Viceroy of Delhi, who purchased him at a high price. By dint of his merits, Iltutmish raised his status step by step till he was made the Governor of Badāūn and was married to a daughter of Qutb-ud-dīn. In recognition of his services during the campaign of Muhammad of Ghūr against the Khokars, he was, by the Sultān's orders, manumitted and elevated as Amīr-ul-Umarā.

[1] *Indian Historical Quarterly*, March, 1937, p. 120.

Thus the choice of the Delhi nobles fell on a worthy man. But on his accession in the year A.D. 1210 or 1211, Iltutmish found himself confronted with an embarrassing situation. Nāsir-ud-dīn Qabācha had asserted his independence in Sind and seemed desirous of extending his authority over the Punjab; and Tāj-ud-dīn Yildiz, who held Ghaznī, still entertained his old pretensions to sovereignty over the Indian conquests of Muhammad. 'Ālī Mardān, a Khaljī noble, who had been appointed Governor of Bengal by Qutb-ud-dīn after the death of Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn in A.D. 1206, had thrown off his allegiance to Delhi after Qutb-ud-dīn's death and had styled himself Sultān 'Alā-ud-dīn. Further, the Hindu princes and chiefs were seething with discontent at their loss of independence; Gwālior and Ranthambhor had been recovered by their rulers during the weak rule of Ārām Shāh. To add to Iltutmish's troubles, some of the Amīrs of Delhi expressed resentment against his rule.

The new Sultān, however, faced the situation boldly. He first effectively suppressed a rebellion of the Amīrs in the plain of Jūd near Delhi, and then brought under his control the different parts of the kingdom of Delhi with its dependencies like Badāūn, Oudh, Benares and Siwālik. The ambitious designs of his rivals were also frustrated. In A.D. 1214 Tāj-ud-dīn Yildiz, being driven from Ghaznī by Sultān Muhammad, the Shāh of Khwārazm, fled to Lahore, conquered the Punjab up to Thānesar and tried to establish his independent power and even to assert his authority over Iltutmish. This was what Iltutmish could hardly tolerate. He promptly marched against his rival, and defeated him in a battle fought near Tarāin in January, A.D. 1216. Yildiz was taken prisoner and sent to Badāūn. Nāsir-ud-dīn Qabācha, who had in the meanwhile advanced to Lahore, was expelled from that city by Iltutmish in A.D. 1217. He was completely subdued in February, A.D. 1228, and was accidentally drowned in the Indus, Sind being annexed to the Delhi Sultānate. About a year later, Iltutmish received a robe of honour and a patent of investiture from Al Mustansir Billah, the reigning Caliph or Khalifah of Baghdād, confirming him in the possession "of all the land and sea which he had conquered" as *Sultān-i-Āzam* (Great Sultān). This added a new element of strength to Iltutmish's authority and gave him a status in the Muslim world. Further, "it fastened the fiction of Khalifat on the Sultānate of Delhi, and involved legally the recognition of the final sovereignty of the Khalifah, an authority outside the geographical limits of India, but inside that vague yet none the less real brotherhood of Islam". On his coins Iltutmish

described himself as the lieutenant of the Caliph. His coins, remarks Thomas, "constituted the veritable commencement of the silver coinage of the Delhi Pathāns".

Meanwhile, Ranthambhor had been recovered by Iltutmish in A.D. 1226 and a year later Mandāwar in the Siwālik hills was captured by him. The Khaljī Maliks of Bengal were reduced to complete submission in the winter of A.D. 1230–1231, and 'Alā-ud-dīn Jānī was appointed Governor of Lakhnautī. Gwālior, which had regained its independence since the death of Qutb-ud-dīn, was recaptured by the Sultān towards the end of A.D. 1232 from its Hindu Rājā, Mangal Deva. The Sultān invaded the kingdom of Mālwa in 1234, and captured the fort of Bhīlsa. He next marched to the famous city of Ujjain, which was also captured and sacked. An image of the famous Vikramāditya was carried off to Delhi. The last expedition of Iltutmish was directed against Banian[1], but on his way he was attacked with such a severe illness that he had to be carried back to Delhi in a litter. This disease proved fatal and he expired on the 29th April, 1236, after a reign of twenty-six years.

It was during the reign of Iltutmish, in the year A.D. 1221, that the Mongols appeared for the first time on the banks of the Indus, under their celebrated leader Chingīz Khān. Chingīz was born in A.D. 1155 and his original name was Temuchīn. He was not merely a conqueror. Being trained in the school of adversity during his early days, he developed in himself the virtues of patience, courage and self-reliance, which enabled him to organise in an empire "the barbarous tribal communities of Central Asia and to found laws and institutions which lasted for generations after his death". He overran the countries of Central and Western Asia with lightning rapidity, and when he attacked Jalāl-ud-dīn Mangabarnī, the last Shāh of Khwārazm or Khiva, the latter fled to the Punjab and sought asylum in the dominions of Iltutmish. The Sultān of Delhi refused to comply with the request of his unwelcome guest. Mangabarnī entered into an alliance with the Khokars, and after defeating Nāsir-ud-dīn Qabācha of Multān, plundered Sind and northern Gujarāt and went away to Persia. The Mongols also retired. India was thus saved from a terrible calamity, but the menace of Mongol raids disturbed the Sultāns of Delhi in subsequent times.

[1] Situated, according to Raverty (p. 623, f.n. 8), in the hill tracts of the Sind-Sāgar Doāb, or in the country immediately west of the Salt Range. Badāūnī (Ranking, Vol. I, p. 95), and Ferishta (Briggs, Vol. I, p. 211), borrowing from Nizām-ud-dīn, write Multān, but they are wrong.

Iltutmish may justly be regarded as the greatest ruler of the Early Turkish Sultānate of Delhi, which lasted till A.D. 1290. To him belongs the credit of having saved the infant Muslim dominion in India from disruption and of having consolidated the conquests of Qutb-ud-dīn into a strong and compact monarchy extending at his death over the whole of Hindustān, with the exception of a few outlying provinces. An intrepid warrior and a stern chastiser of foes, he was busy till the last year of his life in military conquests. He was at the same time gifted with brilliant qualities as a man and extended his patronage to arts and letters. The completion of the structure of the famous Qutb Minār at Delhi by the Sultān in A.D. 1231–1232 stands as an imperishable testimony to his greatness. The column was named not after the first Turkish Sultān of Delhi, as some writers wrongly hold, but after Khwāja Qutb-ud-dīn, a native of Ush near Baghdād, who had come to live in Hindustān and was held in much esteem and veneration by Iltutmish and others. It was out of gratitude that Iltutmish caused the names of his patrons, Sultān Qutb-ud-dīn and Sultān Mu'iz-ud-dīn, to be inscribed on it. A magnificent mosque was also built by the Sultān's orders. He was intensely religious and very particular about saying his prayers. "Never has a sovereign," writes Minhāj-us-Sirāj, "so virtuous, kind-hearted and reverent towards the learned and the divines, sat upon the throne." He is described in some contemporary inscriptions as "the protector of the lands of God", "the helper of the servants of God", etc.

3. Raziyya

Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, the eldest son of Iltutmish, died in April, A.D. 1229, while governing Bengal as his father's deputy. The surviving sons of the Sultān were incapable of the task of administration. Iltutmish, therefore, nominated on his death-bed his daughter Raziyya as his heiress. But the nobles of his court were too proud to bow their heads before a woman, and disregarding the deceased Sultān's wishes, raised to the throne his eldest surviving son, Rukn-ud-dīn Fīrūz, who had been in charge of the government of Badāūn and, after a few years, of Lahore, during his father's lifetime. This was an unfortunate choice. Rukn-ud-dīn was unfit to rule. He indulged in low tastes, neglected the affairs of state, and squandered away its wealth. Matters were made worse by the activities of his mother, Shāh Turkhān, an ambitious woman of humble origin,[1] who seized all power while her son remained

[1] She was originally a Turkish handmaid.

immersed in enjoyment. The whole kingdom was plunged into disorder, and the authority of the central government was set at naught in Badāūn, Multān, Hānsī, Lahore, Oudh and Bengal. The nobles of Delhi, who had been seething with discontent about the undue influence of the queen-mother, made her a prisoner and placed Raziyya on the throne of Delhi. Rukn-ud-dīn Fīrūz, who had taken refuge at Kilokhrī, was also put in prison, where he met his doom on the 9th November, A.D. 1236.

The task before the young queen was not an easy one. Muhammad Junaidī, the *wazīr* of the kingdom, and some other nobles, could not reconcile themselves to the rule of a woman and organised an opposition against her. But Raziyya was not devoid of the virtues necessary in a ruler, and by astuteness and superior diplomacy she soon overpowered her enemies. Her authority was established over Hindustān and the Punjab, and the governors of the distant provinces of Bengal and Sind also acknowledged her sway. Thus, as Minhāj-us-Sirāj has stated, "From Lakhnautī to Debal and Damrilah all the Maliks and Amīrs manifested their obedience and submission". During the early part of Raziyya's reign, an organised attempt to create trouble was made by some heretics of the Qirāmitah and Mulāhidah sects, under the leadership of a Turk named Nūr-ud-dīn. One thousand of them arrived with swords and shields, and entered the Great Mosque on a fixed day, but they were dispersed by the royal troops and the outbreak ended in a ludicrous fiasco.

The queen was not, however, destined to enjoy a peaceful reign. The undue favour shown by her to the Abyssinian slave Jalāl-ud-dīn Yāqūt, who was elevated to the post of master of the stables, offended the Turkish nobles,[1] who were organised in a close corporation. The first to revolt openly was Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Altūniya, the governor of Sarhind, who was secretly instigated by some nobles

[1] Ibn Batūtah wrongly states that her "fondness" for the Abyssinian was "criminal". No such allegation is made by the contemporary Muslim chronicler, Minhāj; he simply writes that the Abyssinian "acquired favour in attendance upon the Sultān" (Raverty, Vol. I, p. 642). Ferishta's only allegation against her is that "a very great degree of familiarity was observed to exist between the Abyssinian and the Queen, so much so, that when she rode he always lifted her on horse by raising her up under the arms" (Briggs, Vol. I, p. 220). As Major Raverty has pointed out, Thomas has assailed the character of this princess without just cause in the following terms: "It was not that a virgin Queen was forbidden to love—she might have indulged in a submissive Prince Consort, or revelled almost unchecked in the dark recesses of the Palace Harem, but wayward fancy pointed in a wrong direction, and led her to prefer a person employed about her Court, an Abyssinian moreover, the favours extended to whom the Turkī nobles resented with one accord" (*Chronicles of the Pathan Kings*, p. 106).

of the court. The queen marched with a large army to suppress the revolt, but in the conflict that ensued the rebel nobles slew Yāqūt, and imprisoned her. She was placed in charge of Altūniya, and her brother Mu'iz-ud-dīn Bahrām was proclaimed Sultān of Delhi. Raziyya tried to extricate herself from the critical situation by marrying Altūniya, but to no effect. She marched with her husband towards Delhi, but on arriving near Kaithal she was deserted by the followers of Altūniya and defeated on the 13th October, 1240, by Mu'iz-ud-dīn Bahrām. She was put to death with her husband the next day. Thus the life of the queen Raziyya ended miserably after a reign of three years, and a few royal months.

Raziyya was possessed of remarkable talents. Ferishta writes that "she read the Koran with correct pronunciation, and in her father's lifetime employed herself in the affairs of the Government". As a queen, she tried to display her virtues more prominently. According to the contemporary Muslim chronicler, Minhāj-us-Sirāj, she "was a great sovereign, sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a dispenser of justice, the cherisher of her subjects, and of warlike talent, and was endowed with all the admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for Kings". She marched in person against her enemies, set aside female garments, discarded the veil, "donned the tunic and assumed the head-dress of a man" and conducted the affairs of her Government with considerable ability in open *darbār*. Thus she endeavoured to "play the king" in all possible ways. But the proud Turkish nobles could not reconcile themselves to the rule of a woman and brought about her downfall in an ignominious manner. The tragic end of Raziyya clearly shows that it is not always very easy to overcome popular prejudice.

The removal of Raziyya was followed by a period of disorder and confusion. Her successors on the throne of Delhi, Mu'iz-ud-dīn Bahrām and 'Alā-ud-dīn Ma'sūd, were worthless and incompetent, and during the six years of their rule the country knew no peace and tranquillity. Foreign invasions added to the woes of Hindustān. In A.D. 1241 the Mongols entered into the heart of the Punjab, and the fair city of Lahore "fell into their merciless grip". In 1245 they advanced up to Uch but were repulsed with great loss. During the closing years of the reign of Ma'sūd Shāh discontent grew in volume and intensity. The Amīrs and Maliks raised to the throne Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, a younger son of Iltutmish, on 10th June, 1246.

4. Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd

Nāsir-ud-dīn was a man of amiable and pious disposition. He was an expert calligraphist and spent his leisure moments in copying the Quran. He was also a patron of the learned. Minhāj-us-Sirāj, who held a high post under the Sultān and received various costly presents from him, dedicated his *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī* to his royal patron.

As a ruler, Nāsir-ud-dīn's abilities fell far short of what the prevailing complicated situation demanded. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban, his minister, and later on his deputy, was the real power behind the throne. Balban proved himself worthy of the confidence thus reposed in him. He did his best to save the State from the perils of internal rebellions and external invasions. The attacks of the Mongols were repelled, and several expeditions were led into the Doāb and other parts of the kingdom to chastise the rebellious Rājās and Zamindārs. A party of nobles, opposed to Balban, induced the Sultān to exile him in 1253. But his enemies mismanaged the affairs of the State, and he was recalled and restored to supreme authority in A.D. 1255. Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd died on the 18th February, 1266, leaving no male heir behind him. Thus was extinguished the line of Iltutmish. Balban, a man of proved ability, whom the deceased Sultān is said to have designated as his successor, then ascended the throne with the acquiescence of the nobles and the officials.

5. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban

Like his predecessors on the throne of Delhi, Balban was descended from the famous Ilbarī tribe of Turkestān. In his early youth, he was taken as a captive to Baghdād by the Mongols, from whom he was purchased by Khwāja Jamāl-ud-dīn of Bussorah, a man of piety and learning. Khwāja Jamāl-ud-dīn brought him to Delhi in A.D. 1232 along with his other slaves, all of whom were purchased by Sultān Iltutmish. Thus Balban belonged to the famous band of Turkish slaves of Iltutmish, known as "The Forty" (*Chāhelgān*). He was originally appointed a *Khasdār* (King's personal attendant) by Iltutmish. But by dint of merit and ability, he rose by degrees to higher positions and ranks, till he became the deputy of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd and his daughter was married to the Sultān in A.D. 1249.

Balban was confronted with a formidable and difficult task on his accession. During the thirty years following the death of

Iltutmish, the affairs of the State had fallen into confusion through the incompetence of his successors. The treasury of the Delhi Sultānate had become almost empty, and its prestige had sunk low, while the ambition and arrogance of the Turkish nobles had increased. In short, as Barnī writes, "Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government, and the source of the glory and splendour of all States, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition". To add to the evil of internal bankruptcy, the Delhi Sultānate was exposed to the menace of recurring Mongol raids. Thus, a strong dictator was the need of the hour.

An experienced administrator, Balban eagerly applied himself to the task of eradicating the evils from which the State had been suffering for a long time. He justly realised that a strong and efficient army was an essential requisite for the stability of his government. He therefore set himself to the task of reorganising the armed forces. "The cavalry and the infantry, both old and new, were placed under the command" of experienced and faithful officers (*maliks*). He next turned his attention towards restoring order in the Doāb and the neighbourhood of Delhi, which had been exposed, for the last thirty years of weak rule, to the predatory raids of the Rājputs of Mewāt (the district round Ālwar) and different robber bands. Life, property and commerce had become unsafe. The Sultān drove away the Mewātīs from the jungles in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and put many of them to the sword. He also took precautionary steps against any future disturbances by building a fort at Gopālgir and by establishing several posts near the city of Delhi in charge of Afghān officers. In the next year (1267), Balban suppressed the brigands in the Doāb. He personally rode to their strongholds at Kampil, Patiālī and Bhojpur. He built strong forts in those places and also repaired the fort of Jalālī. Thus order and security were restored, and sixty years later Barnī remarked that "the roads have ever since been free from robbers". In the same year he punished the rebels in Katehr (now in Rohilkhand). After a few days he marched into the mountains of Jūd and suppressed the hill tribes there.

In pursuance of his policy of curbing the power of the nobles, Balban tried to regulate the tenure of lands in the Doāb enjoyed by 2,000 *Shamsī* horsemen since the time of Iltutmish on condition of military service. We know from Barnī that most of the original grantees had died or grown infirm by this time, and their descendants had "taken possession of the grants as an inheritance from their fathers, and had caused their names to be recorded in records of

the *Ariz* (Muster-master)", though there was a general tendency on their part to evade service in the field. Balban tried to remove this abuse by a moderate dose of reform. He resumed the old grants but allotted subsistence allowances to the grantees according to their age. This caused discontent among the grantees, who represented their case to the old Fakhr-ud-dīn, *Kotwāl* of Delhi, who persuaded the Sultān by an emotional speech to rescind the orders for the resumption of lands. Thus feelings triumphed over prudence, and an old abuse was allowed to remain as a sort of drain on the resources of the State.

While thus trying to make his government firm and stable within, Balban did not fail to think of protecting the north-west frontier against the invasions of the Mongols. The latter, having established their power in Ghaznī and Transoxiana and captured Baghdād after murdering the Caliph, Al Mu'tasim, advanced into the Punjab and Sind. In the year 1271 the Sultān marched to Lahore and ordered the reconstruction of the fort, which had been destroyed by the Mongols during the preceding reigns. For long the Sultān's cousin, Sher Khān Sunqar, an able servant of the State, who held the fiefs of Bhātinda, Bhatnair, Sāmāna and Sunām, "had been a great barrier to the inroads of the Mongols". But the Sultān was suspicious of him, as he was one of "The Forty" and had avoided coming to Delhi since his accession. He died about this time, and Barnī writes that "the Sultān caused him to be poisoned". If Barnī's statement be true, then Balban's action was not only bad but also impolitic. Sher Khān had defended the frontier with remarkable ability and had also brought under control various defiant tribes. His death now encouraged the Mongols to ravage the frontier tracts. To check their depredations the Sultān appointed his eldest son, Prince Muhammad (popularly known as *Khān-i-Shahīd*, the Martyr Prince), governor of Multān. Prince Muhammad was a man of moderate habits, endowed with courage and ability, and a generous patron of letters. At the same time the Sultān placed his second son, Bughrā Khān, in charge of the territories of Sāmāna and Sunām, instructing him to strengthen his army to check the apprehended incursions of the Mongols. About the year 1279 the marauders actually renewed their raids and even crossed the Sutlej. But they were completely routed by the combined troops of Prince Muhammad coming from Multān, of Bughrā Khān coming from Sāmāna, and of Malik Mubārak Bektars coming from Delhi. Thus the Mongol menace was warded off for the time being.

In the same year another danger threatened Balban from the

rich province of Bengal, the distance of which often tempted its governors to defy the authority of Delhi, especially when it grew weak. This was the rebellion of Tughril Khān, the Sultān's deputy in Bengal. Tughril was an active, courageous and generous Turk and his administration in Bengal was marked with success. But ambition soon gained possession of his mind. The old age of the Delhi Sultān, and the recrudescence of Mongol raids on the north-west frontier, encouraged him to raise the standard of revolt at the instigation of some counsellors.

The rebellion of Tughril Khān greatly perturbed Balban, who at once sent a large army to Bengal under the command of Alptigīn *Mu-i-darāz* (long-haired), entitled Amīr Khān. But Amīr Khān was defeated by the rebel governor and many of his troops were won over by the latter by lavish gifts. The Sultān became so much enraged at the defeat of Amīr Khān that he ordered him to be hanged over the gate of Delhi. Next year (1280) another army was sent to Bengal under Malik Targhī, but this expedition, too, was repulsed by Tughril. Highly exasperated at this turn of affairs, Balban "now devoted all his attention and energy to effect the defeat of Tughril". He decided to march in person to Lakhnautī, the capital of Western Bengal, with a powerful army, accompanied by his son, Bughrā Khān. In the meanwhile, Tughril, on learning of the approach of the infuriated Sultān, had left Lakhnautī and fled into the jungles of Jājnagar. The Sultān advanced into Eastern Bengal in pursuit of the runaway rebel and his comrades, who were accidentally discovered by a follower of Balban named Sher Andāz. Another of his followers, named Malik Muqaddir, soon brought Tughril down with an arrow-shot; his head was cut off and his body was flung into the river. His relatives and most of his troops were captured. On returning to Lakhnautī the Sultān inflicted exemplary punishments on the relatives and adherents of Tughril. Before leaving Bengal he appointed his second son, Bughrā Khān, governor of the province, and instructed him not to indulge in pleasure but to be careful in the work of administration.

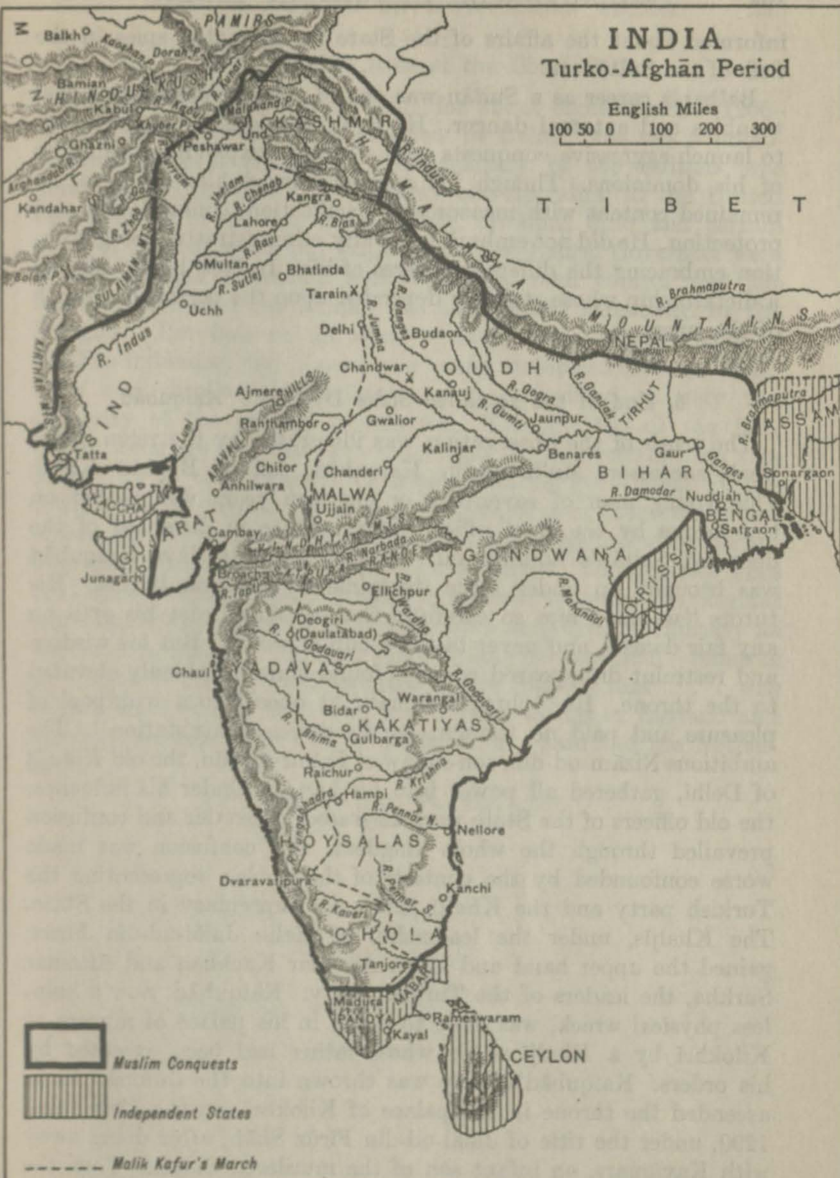
Soon a great calamity befell the Sultān. The Mongols invaded the Punjab in A.D. 1285 under their leader Tamar, and the Sultān's eldest son, Prince Muhammad, who had been placed in charge of Multān, proceeded towards Lahore and Dīpālpur. He was killed in an ambush, while fighting with the Mongols, on the 9th March, A.D. 1285. This sacrifice of life earned for him the posthumous title of *Shahīd*, "the Martyr". The death of this excellent prince gave a terrible shock to the old Sultān, then eighty years of age.

It cast him into a state of deep depression and hastened his death. The Sultān first intended to nominate Bughrā Khān as his successor, But the latter's unwillingness to accept the responsibilities of kingship made him nominate Kai Khusrav, his grandson. Balban breathed his last towards the close of the year A.D. 1287 after a reign of about twenty-two years.

As has already been noted, the Delhi Sultānate was beset with danger and difficulties at the time of Balban's accession, which could not be removed, to borrow Carlyle's phrase, "by mere rose-water surgery". The Sultān, therefore, adopted a policy of sternness and severity to those whom he considered to be the enemies of the State. It must be admitted to his credit that, by his firmness towards ambitious nobles, rebel subjects and unruly tribes, and by his constant vigilance against the Mongols, he saved the Sultānate from impending disintegration and gave it strength and efficiency. But in two cases, that is in doing away with Sher Khān and Amīr Khān, suspicion and anger triumphed over prudence and foresight. Referring to the death of Amīr Khān, Barnī observes that his "condign punishment excited a strong feeling of opposition among the wise men of the day, who looked upon it as a token that the reign of Balban was drawing to an end".

Balban did his best to raise the prestige and majesty of the Delhi Sultānate. After his accession to the throne, he adopted a dignified mode of living. He remodelled his court after the manner of the old Persian kings and introduced Persian etiquette and ceremonial. Under him the Delhi court acquired celebrity for its great magnificence, and it gave shelter to many (not less than fifteen) exiled princes from Central Asia. The famous poet Amīr Khusrav, surnamed the "Parrot of India", was a contemporary of Balban. The Sultān had a lofty sense of kingly dignity. He always appeared in full dress even before his private attendants. He excluded men of humble origin from important posts.

Balban considered the sovereign to be the representative of God upon earth, but he believed that it behoved him to maintain the dignity of his position by performing certain duties faithfully. These were, according to him, to protect religion and fulfil the provisions of the *Shariat*, to check immoral and sinful actions, to appoint pious men to offices and to dispense justice with equality. "All that I can do," he once remarked, "is to crush the cruelties of the cruel and to see that all persons are equal before the law. The glory of the State rests upon a rule which makes its subjects happy and prosperous." He had a strong sense of justice, which he administered without any partiality. To keep himself well


INDIA
Turko-Afghān Period
English Miles
100 50 0 100 200 300
TIBET
PAMIRS
Balkh
Bamian
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Peshawar
Und
KASHMIR
Kangra
Lahore
Multan
Bhatinda
Tarain
Uchh
Delhi
Budaon
Chandwar
Kanauj
OUDH
Jaunpur
Benares
NEPAL
TIRHUT
ASSAM
Sonargaon
Gaur
BIHAR
Nuddiah
BENGAL
Satgaon
SIND
Tatta
Ajmere
Ranthambor
Gwalior
Kalinjar
Chitor
Chanderi
Anhilwara
MALWA
Ujjain
KACCHA
Cambay
Junagarh
Broach
Ellichpur
GONDWANA
ORISSA
Deogiri
(Daulatabad)
Chaul
YADAVAS
Warangal
Bidar
KAKATIYAS
Gulbarga
Raichur
Hampi
Nellore
HOYSALAS
Dvaravatipura
Kanchi
CHOLA
Tanjore
MABAR
Madura
PANDYA
Kayal
Rameswaram
CEYLON
R. Indus
R. Jhelam
R. Chenab
R. Ravi
R. Sutlej
R. Bias
R. Jumna
R. Ganges
R. Gogra
R. Gumti
R. Gandak
R. Brahmaputra
R. Damodar
R. Narbada
R. Tapti
R. Mahanadi
R. Wardha
R. Godavari
R. Bhima
R. Krishna
R. Pennar N.
R. Pennar S.
R. Kaveri
R. Luni
HINDU KUSH
HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS
SULAIMAN MTS.
ARAVALLI HILLS
VINDHYA MTS.
SATPURA RANGE
Khyber P.
Bolan P.
Muslim Conquests
Independent States
Malik Kafur's March

informed about the affairs of the State he appointed spies in the fiefs of the Sultānate.

Balban's career as a Sultān was one of struggle against internal troubles and external danger. He had, therefore, no opportunity to launch aggressive conquests with a view to expanding the limits of his dominions. Though his courtiers urged him to these, he remained content with measures of pacification, consolidation and protection. He did not embark upon any administrative reorganisation embracing the different spheres of life. In fact, he established a dictatorship whose stability depended upon the personal strength of the ruler.

6. End of the so-called Slave Dynasty : Kaiqubād

The truth of the observation was illustrated by the reign of his weak successor, Mu'iz-ud-dīn Kaiqubād, son of Bughrā Khān. This young man of seventeen or eighteen years was placed on the throne by the chief officers of the State in disregard of the deceased Sultān's nomination. During his early days Kaiqubād was brought up under stern discipline by his grandfather. His tutors "watched him so carefully that he never cast his eyes on any fair damsel, and never tasted a cup of wine". But his wisdom and restraint disappeared when he found himself suddenly elevated to the throne. He "plunged himself at once into a whirlpool of pleasure and paid no thought to the duties of his station". The ambitious Nizām-ud-dīn, son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-dīn, the old *Kotwāl* of Delhi, gathered all power into his hands. Under his influence, the old officers of the State were disgraced. Disorder and confusion prevailed through the whole kingdom, and confusion was made worse confounded by the contests of the nobles, representing the Turkish party and the Khaljī party, for supremacy in the State. The Khaljīs, under the leadership of Malik Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz, gained the upper hand and killed Aitamar Kachhan and Aitamar Surkha, the leaders of the Turkish party. Kaiqubād, now a helpless physical wreck, was done to death in his palace of mirrors at Kilokhrī by a Khaljī noble whose father had been executed by his orders. Kaiqubād's body was thrown into the Jumnā. Fīrūz ascended the throne in the palace of Kilokhrī, on the 13th June, 1290, under the title of Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh, after doing away with Kayūmars, an infant son of the murdered Sultān. Thus the work of Balban was undone and his dynasty came to an end in an ignominious manner.

7. Nature of the Rule of the Ilbarī Turks

The Ilbarī Turks ruled in India for about eight decades (1206–1290), but under them the kingdom of Delhi "was not a homogeneous political entity".[1] The authority of the Sultāns was normally recognised in the territory corresponding to the United Provinces of Āgra and Oudh, Bihār, Gwālior, Sind and certain parts of Central India and Rājputanā. The Bengal Governors were mostly inclined to remain independent of their control, and the imperial hold over the Punjab was occasionally threatened by the Mongols. The fiefs on all sides of Delhi were indeed nuclei of Muslim influence, but there were many independent local chieftains and disaffected inhabitants always inclined to defy the authority of the central government. The Sultāns of the line, whose deeds are recorded above, certainly did not refrain from acts of severity in their attempt to establish strong government in the newly conquered territory. But the estimate of their character by historians like Smith lacks justification. Several kings including Balban were men noted for their strength of character. Though they were bent upon suppressing the defiant chieftains, many of the original inhabitants who submitted to them were employed in military as well as civil offices. "On the whole it may be assumed," remarks Sir Wolseley Haig, "that the rule of the Slave Kings . . . was as just and humane as that of the Norman Kings in England and far more tolerant than that of Philip II in Spain and the Netherlands."

[1] *Cambridge Hist.*, Vol. III, p. 87.

CHAPTER III

THE KHALJĪS AND THE EXPANSION OF THE SULTĀNATE TO THE SOUTH

1. Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz

THE people of Delhi did not at first welcome the new Khaljī ruler, Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz, as they considered him to be of Afghān stock. But the late Major Raverty sought to prove that the Khaljīs could not be classed as Afghāns or Pathāns, and he assigns to them a Turkish origin.[1] The contemporary historian Ziā-ud-dīn Barnī, however, states that Jalāl-ud-dīn "came of a race different from the Turks" and that by the death of Kaiqubād "the Turks lost the Empire". Some modern writers suggest that the Khaljīs were originally of Turkish origin but had acquired Afghān character during their long residence in Afghānistān, and "between them and the Turks there was no love lost". Be that as it may, they took advantage of the political disorders of the time to establish their power.

Jalāl-ud-dīn was at first not much liked by the nobles and the populace of Delhi, and had to make Kilokhrī the seat of his government. However, as Barnī writes, the "excellence of his character, his justice, generosity and devotion, gradually removed the aversion of the people, and hopes of grants of land assisted in conciliating, though grudgingly and unwillingly, the affections of his nobles".

The new Sultān was an old man of seventy when he was elected to the throne. "Preoccupied with preparations for the next world," he proved to be too mild and tender to hold his power in those troublous times. Disposed to rule without bloodshed or oppression, he showed "the most impolitic tenderness towards rebels and other criminals". When, in the second year of his reign, Malik Chhajjū, a nephew of Balban, who held the fief of Kara, rebelled against him with the help of several nobles, he, out of imprudent generosity, pardoned the rebels.

As a natural result of the Sultān's peaceful disposition and leniency, there was a recrudescence of baronial intrigues and the

[1] *J.A.S.B.*, 1875, Part I, pp. 35–7.

authority of the Delhi throne ceased to be respected. This made him unpopular even with the Khaljī nobles, who aspired after power and privileges during the rule of one of their leaders. One of them, Malik Ahmad Chap, who held the post of Master of Ceremonies, told him plainly "that a King should reign and observe the rules of government, or else be content to relinquish the throne". There was only one unfortunate departure from this generous policy, when, by the Sultān's order, Siddī Maulā, a *darvesh*, was executed on mere suspicion of treason.

Such a ruler could not pursue a vigorous policy of conquest. Thus his expedition against Ranthambhor was a failure. The Sultān turned away from capturing the fort there with the conviction that it could not be accomplished "without sacrificing the lives of many Mussalmāns". But he was more successful against a horde of Mongols, numbering about 150,000 strong, who in A.D. 1292 invaded India under a grandson of Halākū (Hulāgū). Severely defeated by the Sultān's troops the invaders made peace. Their army was permitted to return from India, but Ulghū, a descendant of Chingīz, and many of the rank and file embraced Islam, settled near Delhi and came to be known as "New Mussalmāns". This was an ill-advised concession, which produced trouble in the future. The "New Mussalmāns" proved to be turbulent neighbours of the Delhi Government and caused it much anxiety. Even such a peace-loving king could not die a natural death on his bed. By a strange irony of fate he was done to death by his ambitious nephew in 1296.

2. 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī

'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, nephew of Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz, was brought up by his uncle with affection and care. Out of excessive fondness for this fatherless nephew, Fīrūz made him also his son-in-law. On being raised to the throne of Delhi, Fīrūz placed him in charge of the fief of Kara in the district of Allahābād. It was here that seeds of ambition were sown in 'Alā-ud-dīn's mind. The "crafty suggestions of the Kara rebels", writes Barnī, "made a lodgement in his brain, and, from the very first year of his occupation of that territory, he began to follow up his design of proceeding to some distant quarter and amassing money". It might be that domestic unhappiness, due to the intrigues of his mother-in-law, Malikā Jahān, and his wife, also made him inclined to establish power and influence independent of the Delhi court. A successful raid into Mālwa in 1292 and the capture of the town of Bhīlsa, for which he was rewarded with the fief of Oudh in addition to that of Kara, whetted his ambition.

At Bhīlsa, 'Alā-ud-dīn heard vague rumours of the fabulous wealth of the kingdom of Devagiri, which extended over the western Deccan and was then ruled by Rāmchandradeva of the Yādava dynasty,[1] and resolved to conquer it. Concealing his intention from his uncle, he marched to the Deccan through Central India and the Vindhyan region at the head of a few thousand cavalry and arrived before Devagiri. Contact of Islam with this part of India had begun much earlier, since the eighth century at the latest. Rāmchandradeva was not prepared for such an attack, and his son, Śaṅkaradeva, had gone southwards with the greater part of his army. He was thus taken by surprise, defeated after a futile resistance, and compelled to make peace with the invader by promising to pay a heavy ransom. But as 'Alā-ud-dīn was about to start marching towards Kara, Sankaradeva hurried back to Devagiri and offered battle with the invaders, in spite of his father's request to the contrary. His enthusiasm brought him initial success, but he was soon defeated and a general panic ensued in his army, which led his followers to run away in different directions in utter confusion. Rāmchandradeva solicited the help of the other rulers of Peninsular India, but to no effect, and he was also greatly handicapped for want of provisions. No way was left for him but to sue for peace, which was concluded on harder terms than before. 'Alā-ud-dīn returned to Kara with enormous booty in gold, silver, silk, pearls and precious stones. This daring raid of the Khaljī invader not only entailed a heavy economic drain on the Deccan, but it also opened the way for the ultimate Muslim domination over the lands beyond the Vindhyas.

'Alā-ud-dīn had no intention of sharing the wealth with the Sultān of Delhi. Rather it widened the range of his ambition with the throne of Delhi as its goal. In spite of the honest counsels of his officers, especially of Ahmad Chap, the most outspoken of all, the old Sultān, Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz, blinded by his affection for his nephew and son-in-law, 'Alā-ud-dīn, allowed himself to be lured into a trap laid by the latter. Urged on by a traitor at his court, he hurried on a boat to meet his favourite nephew at Kara without taking even the necessary precautions for self-defence, and this mistake cost him his life. The adherents of 'Alā-ud-dīn proclaimed him Sultān in his camp on the 19th July, 1296 But 'Alā-ud-dīn, as Barnī writes, "did not escape retribution for the blood of his patron. . . . Fate at length placed a betrayer in his

[1] We have an interesting note about this kingdom in *J.R.A.S.*, Vol. II, p. 398. Eastern Deccan was then ruled by Rudrammā Devī, daughter of Rājā Ganapati of the Kākatīya dynasty.

path (Malik Kāfūr) by whom his family was destroyed . . . and the retribution which fell upon it never had a parallel even in any infidel land".

It was next necessary for 'Alā-ud-dīn to establish himself firmly at Delhi, where the Queen-dowager, Malikā Jahān, had in the meanwhile placed her younger son on the throne under the title of Rukn-ud-dīn Ibrāhīm. Her elder son, Arkalī Khān, dissatisfied with some of her acts, had remained at Multān. 'Alā-ud-dīn, on hearing of this dissension, marched hurriedly for Delhi in the midst of heavy rains. After a feeble resistance Ibrāhīm, deserted by his treacherous followers, left Delhi and fled to Multān with his mother and the faithful Ahmad Chap. 'Alā-ud-dīn won over the nobles, the officers and the populace of Delhi to his cause by a lavish distribution of the Deccan gold. On entering Delhi he was enthroned in the Red Palace of Balban on the 3rd October, 1296. The fugitive relatives and friends of the late Sultān were not allowed to remain in Multān. They were captured by 'Alā-ud-dīn's brother, Ulugh Khān, and his minister, Zafar Khān. Arkalī Khān and Ibrāhīm, with their brother-in-law, Ulghū Khān the Mongol, and Ahmad Chap, were blinded while being carried to Delhi. All the sons of Arkalī were put to death; he and his brother were confined in the fort of Hānsī; and Malikā Jahān and Ahmad Chap were kept under close restraint at Delhi.

'Alā-ud-dīn's position was, however, still precarious. He had to reckon with several hostile forces, like the refractoriness of the Turks, the rebellious attitude of the rulers of Rājputāna, Mālwa and Gujarāt, the plots of some nobles, who tried to imitate his example, and the apprehension of the Mongol menace. But quite different from his uncle in temperament and outlook, the new Sultān tried to combat these odds with indomitable energy, and his efforts were crowned with success.

The Mongol raids formed a source of constant anxiety and alarm to the Delhi Government for a long time. Within a few months of 'Alā-ud-dīn's accession, a large horde of the Mongols invaded India, but Zafar Khān repulsed them with great slaughter near Jullundur. The Mongols appeared again in the second year of the Sultān's reign under their leader, Saldi. This time also Zafar Khān vanquished them, and sent their leader with about 2,000 followers as prisoners to Delhi. But in the year 1299 Qutlugh Khwāja marched into India with several thousand Mongols. This time their object was not plunder but conquest, and so they "did not ravage the countries bordering on their march, nor did they attack the forts". They arrived in the vicinity of Delhi with a

view to investing the city, where a great panic consequently prevailed. Zafar Khān, "the Rustam of the age and the hero of the time", charged them vigorously but was killed in the thick of the fighting. His jealous master felt satisfied that "he had been got rid of without disgrace". Probably struck with awe at the valour of Zafar Khān, the Mongols soon retreated. They led another incursion into India, and advanced as far as Amroha in A.D. 1304 under 'Alī Beg and Khwāja Tash, but were beaten back with heavy losses. The last Mongol invasion during this reign took place in 1307–1308, when a chieftain named Iqbālmand led an army across the Indus. But he was defeated and slain. Many of the Mongol commanders were captured and put to death. The Mongols, dispirited by repeated failures in all their invasions and terrified by the harsh measures of the Delhi Sultān, did not appear again in India during his reign, to the great relief of the people of the north-west frontier and Delhi.

Besides chastising the Mongols, the Sultān, like Balban, adopted some defensive measures to guard effectively the north-west frontier of his dominion. He caused old forts to be repaired and new ones to be erected on the route of the Mongols. For better security, garrisons were maintained in the outposts of Sāmāna and Dīpālpur, always ready for war, and the royal army was strengthened. Ghāzī Malik (afterwards Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq), who, as Governor of the Punjab since 1305, was in charge of the frontier defences, ably held the Mongols in check for about a quarter of a century.

The "New Mussalmāns", settled near Delhi, were also severely dealt with by 'Alā-ud-dīn. They were discontented and restless because their aspirations for offices and other gains in their land of domicile had not been fulfilled, and they actually rebelled when 'Alā-ud-dīn's army was returning from the conquest of Gujarāt. The Sultān also dismissed all "New Mussalmāns" from his service. This added to their discontent, and in despair they hatched a conspiracy to assassinate him. But this conspiracy was soon discovered and the Sultān wreaked a terrible vengeance on them by issuing a decree for their wholesale massacre. Thus between twenty and thirty thousand "New Mussalmāns" were mercilessly slaughtered in one single day.

The uniform success of 'Alā-ud-dīn during the early years of his reign turned his head. He began to form "the most impossible schemes" and nourish "the most extravagant desires". He wanted to "establish a new religion and creed" and also aspired to emulate Alexander the Great as a conqueror of the world. In these designs, he sought the advice of Qāzī 'Alā-ul-mulk (uncle of the historian

Ziā Barnī), formerly his lieutenant at Kara and then *Kotwāl* of Delhi, who at once pointed out to him the unsoundness of his schemes. As regards the first design, Qāzī 'Alā-ul-Mulk remarked that "the prophetic office has never appertained to kings and never will, so long as the world lasts, though some prophets have discharged the functions of royalty". About the second one, he observed that a large part of Hindustān still remained unsubdued, that the kingdom was exposed to the raids of the Mongols, and that there was no *wazīr* like Aristotle to govern the state in the Sultān's absence. The Sultān was thus brought to his senses. He abandoned his "wild projects", but still described himself on his coins as "the Second Alexander".[1]

The reign of 'Alā-ud-dīn witnessed the rapid expansion of the Muslim dominion over different parts of India. With it begins, as Sir Wolseley Haig remarks, "the imperial period of the Sultānate", which lasted for nearly half a century. In 1297 'Alā-ud-dīn sent a strong army under his brother, Ulugh Khān, and his *wazīr*, Nusrat Khān, to conquer the Hindu kingdom of Gujarāt, which, though occasionally plundered, had remained unsubdued and was then ruled by Rāi Karnadeva II, a Baghela Rājput prince. The invaders overran the whole kingdom and captured Kamalā Devī, the beautiful queen of Karnadeva II, while the Rājā and his daughter, Devalā Devī, took refuge with King Rāmchandradeva of Devagiri. They also plundered the rich ports of Gujarāt and brought away enormous booty and a young eunuch named Kāfūr. They returned to Delhi with profuse wealth, Kamalā Devī, who later on became the favourite wife of 'Alā-ud-dīn, and Kāfūr, who rose to be the most influential noble in the State and its virtual master for some time before and after 'Alā-ud-dīn's death.

Ranthambhor, though reduced by Qutb-ud-dīn and Iltutmish, had been recovered by the Rājputs, and was then held by the brave Rājput chief Hamīr Deva. He had given shelter to some of the discontented "New Mussalmāns", which offended 'Alā-ud-dīn. In A.D. 1299, the Sultān sent an expedition for the reduction of the fortress, under the command of his brother, Ulugh Khān, and Nusrat Khān, who then held the fiefs of Biyāna and Kara respectively. They reduced Jhāīn and encamped before Ranthambhor, but were soon beaten back by the Rājputs. Nusrat Khān was killed by a stone discharged from a catapult (*maghribī*) in the fort while he was superintending the construction of a mound (*pāshib*) and a redoubt (*gargaj*). On hearing of this discomfiture of his troops, 'Alā-ud-dīn marched in person towards Ranthambhor.

[1] Wright, *Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum*, Vol. II, p. 8.

While enjoying the chase with only a few attendants at Tilpat, on his way to the fortress, he was attacked and wounded in his defenceless condition by his nephew, Ākat Khān, acting in concert with some "New Mussalmāns". But the traitor was soon captured and put to death with his associates. Other conspiracies to deprive 'Alā-ud-dīn of his throne were also suppressed. He captured the stronghold of Ranthambhor in July, 1301, with considerable difficulty, after one year's siege. Hamīr Deva, and the "New Mussalmāns" who had found shelter with him, were put to death. Amīr Khusrav, who gives an interesting account of the siege of the fortress, writes: "One night the Rāi lit a fire at the top of the hill, and threw his women and family into the flames, and, rushing on the enemy with a few devoted adherents, they sacrificed their lives in despair."[1] Hamīr's minister, Ranmal, who had betrayed his master and gone over to the side of the enemy with several other comrades, was paid back in his own coin for his treachery by being done to death by the order of the Sultān. 'Alā-ud-dīn started for Delhi after placing Ulugh Khān in charge of Ranthambhor, but the latter died five months after the Sultān's departure.

'Alā-ud-dīn also organised an expedition against Mewār, the land of the brave Guhila Rājputs, which, being provided by Nature with sufficient means of defence, had so long defied external invasions. This expedition, as in the case of Ranthambhor, was, in all probability, the outcome of the Sultān's ambitious desire for territorial expansion. If tradition is to be believed, its immediate cause was his infatuation for Rānā Ratan Singh's queen, Padminī, of exquisite beauty. But this fact is not explicitly mentioned in any contemporary chronicle or inscription. The Rānā was carried as a captive to the Sultān's camp, but was rescued by the Rājputs in a chivalrous manner. A small band of Rājputs under their two brave leaders, Gorā and Bādal, resisted the invaders at the outer gate of the fort of Chitor, but they could not long withstand the organised strength of the Delhi army. When further resistance seemed impossible, they preferred death to disgrace, and performed, as Tod describes, "that horrible rite, the *jauhar*, where the females are immolated to preserve them from pollution or captivity. The funeral pyre was lighted within the 'great subterranean retreat', in chambers impervious to the light of day, and the defenders of Chitor beheld

[1] *Ta'rīkh-i-'Alāi*, Elliot, Vol. III, p. 75. The author of the *Hammīr-Mahākāvya* gives a different account of Hamīr's death. According to him, the defeat of Hamīr was due to the defection of his two generals, Ratipāla and Kṛishṇapāla. When on being severely wounded Hamīr realised that his end was near, he cut off his head with his own sword rather than submit to the invaders. Ishwari Prasad, *Medieval India*, p. 195, footnote.

in procession the queens, their own wives and daughters, to the number of several thousands. The fair Padminī closed the throng. . . . They were conveyed to the cavern, and the opening closed upon them, leaving them to find security from dishonour in the devouring element".

Amīr Khusrav, who accompanied the Sultān's army on the Chitor expedition, writes that the fort of Chitor was captured by 'Alā-ud-dīn on the 26th August, 1303, and that the latter bestowed the government of Chitor on his eldest son, Khizr Khān, and renamed the city Khizrābād before he returned to Delhi. Owing to the pressure of the Rājputs, Khizr Khān had to leave Chitor about the year 1311, and it was then entrusted by the Sultān to Māldeo, the chief of Jālor. But after several years, Chitor was recovered by the Rājputs under Hamīr or his son and became once again the capital of Mewār.

After reducing Chitor to submission, 'Alā-ud-dīn sent an army to Mālwa. Rāi Mahlak Deva of Mālwa and his *pardhān*, Koka, opposed it with a large force but were defeated and slain in November or December, 1305. 'Ain-ul-mulk, the Sultān's confidential chamberlain, was appointed Governor of Mālwa. This was followed by the Muslim conquest of Ujjain, Māndū, Dhār and Chanderī. Thus by the end of the year A.D. 1305, practically the whole of Northern India fell under the sway of Khaljī imperialism, which was then emboldened to embark on its career of expansion in the Deccan.

Although there was an earlier intercourse of the west coast of India with the Muhammadans, chiefly through commerce, the first Muslim conquest of the Deccan was effected by the Khaljīs under 'Alā-ud-dīn. His southern campaigns were the outcome of his political as well as economic motives. It was but natural for an ambitious ruler like him to make attempts for the extension of his influence over the south after the north had been brought under control. The Deccan's wealth was also "too tempting to an enterprising adventurer".

The existing political conditions in India beyond the Vindhyas afforded 'Alā-ud-dīn an opportunity to march there. It was then divided into four well-marked kingdoms. The first was the Yādava kingdom of Devagiri, under its wise and efficient ruler, Rāmchandradeva (1271–1309). The tract known as Telingāna in the east, with its capital at Warangal (in the Nizām's dominions), was under Pratāparudradeva I of the Kākatīya dynasty. The Hoysalas, then under their ruler, Vīra Ballāla III (1292–1342), occupied the country now included in the Mysore State with their capital

at Dorasamudra, modern Halēbīd, famous for its beautiful temples. In the far south was the kingdom of the Pāṇḍyas, stretching over the territory called M'abar by the Muslim writers and including the modern districts of Madurā, Rāmnad and Tinnevelly. It was then ruled by Māravarman Kulasekhara (1268–1311), who greatly contributed to its prosperity by encouraging commerce. There were also some minor rulers like the Telegu-Choḍa chief, Manma-Siddha III, ruling in the Nellore district, the Kalinga-Ganga king, Bhānu-deva, reigning in Orissa, the Kerala king, Ravivarman, ruling from Kollam (Quilon), and the Ālupa chief, Bankideva-Ālupendra, ruling from Mangalore. There was no love lost among the Hindu kingdoms of the south. During 'Alā-ud-dīn's raid on Devagiri in 1294, Rāmchandradeva received no help from any of them. Hoysala kings at times attacked Rāmchandradeva of Devagiri. Internal dissensions among the States of the south invited invasions from the north.

In March, 1307, 'Alā-ud-dīn sent an expedition under Kāfūr, now entitled Malik Nāib (lieutenant) of the kingdom, against Rāmchandradeva of Devagiri, who had withheld the payment of the tribute due on account of the province of Ellichpur, for the last three years, and had given refuge to Rāi Karnadeva II, the fugitive ruler of Gujarāt. Assisted by Khwāja Hājī (deputy *ariz-i-mamālik*), Kāfūr marched through Mālwa, and advanced to Devagiri. He laid waste the whole country, seized much booty and compelled Rāmchandradeva to sue for peace. Rāmchandradeva was sent to 'Alā-ud-dīn at Delhi, where the Sultān treated him kindly and sent him back to his kingdom after six months. Rāmchandradeva continued to rule thenceforth as a vassal of the Delhi Sultānate and regularly remitted revenue to Delhi. Rāi Karna's daughter, Devalā Devī, was captured by the invader and taken by Alp Khān, governor of Gujarāt, to Delhi, where she was married to the Sultān's eldest son, Khizr Khān.

An expedition sent by 'Alā-ud-dīn against Kākatīya Pratāparudradeva in A.D. 1303 had failed. But the humiliation of the Yādavas encouraged him to make a second attempt in 1307 to bring the Kākatīya king under his authority and fleece him of his wealth. The Sultān had no desire to annex the kingdom of Warangal, the administration of which from a great distance would prove to be a difficult task. His real object was to acquire the vast wealth of this kingdom and make Pratāparudradeva acknowledge his authority. This is clear from his instruction to Kāfūr, who commanded the invading army this time also: "If the Rāi consented to surrender his treasure and jewels, elephants

and horses, and also to send treasure and elephants in the following year, Malik Nāib Kāfūr was to accept these terms and not to press the Rāi too hard". On reaching Devagiri, the Delhi army was assisted by the now humble Rāmchandradeva, who also supplied it with an efficient commissariat, as it marched towards Telingāna. Pratāparudradeva tried to resist the invaders by shutting himself up in the strong fort of Warangal. But the fort was besieged with such vigour that, being reduced to extremities, the Kākatīya ruler had to open negotiations for peace in March, 1310. He surrendered to Kāfūr a hundred elephants, seven thousand horses, and large quantities of jewels and coined money and agreed to send tribute annually to Delhi. Kāfūr then returned to Delhi through Devagiri, Dhār and Jhāīn with an immense booty, carried, as Amīr Khusrav writes, "on a thousand camels groaning under the 'weight of treasure'".

After these successes, 'Alā-ud-dīn soon determined to bring under his authority the kingdoms in the far south, renowned for the enormous wealth of their temples. On the 18th November, 1310, a large army under the command of Malik Nāib and Khwāja Hājī marched from Delhi against the kingdom of the Hoysalas, and passing by way of Devagiri reached Dorasamudra. The Hoysala king, Vīra Ballāla III, was taken by surprise in the first attack on his capital. Taking into consideration the overwhelming strength of the invaders, he submitted to them and surrendered all his treasures. The victors further captured thirty-six elephants and plundered a vast quantity of gold, silver, jewels and pearls from the temples. Malik Nāib despatched to Delhi all the captured property and also a Hoysala Prince. The Prince returned to Dorasamudra on the 6th May, 1313, amidst the great rejoicings of the people there. But the Hoysalas became vassals of the Delhi Sultān.

After twelve days' stay in the city of Dorasamudra, Malik Nāib turned his attention towards the country of Ma'bar, extending over nearly the whole of the Coromandel Coast and along the western coast from Quilon to Cape Comorin. The Pāṇḍyas then ruled over this territory. A fratricidal war between Sundara Pāṇḍya, a legitimate son of the Pāṇḍya ruler, Kulasekhara, and Vīra Pāṇḍya, his illegitimate but favourite son, gave an opportunity to Malik Nāib for his meditated invasion of Ma'bar. Sundara Pāṇḍya, enraged at his father's partiality for Vīra Pāṇḍya, who had been nominated as his successor, murdered the king towards the end of May, 1310, and seized the crown for himself. But he was defeated in an engagement with his brother about the month of November of the same year, and thus, hard pressed, sought Muslim help.

Malik Nāib marched to the Deccan at the head of a large army. On the 14th April, 1311, he reached Madura, the capital of the Pāṇḍyas, which he found empty, for, on hearing of his advance, Vīra Pāṇḍya had left the city "with the Rānīs". But he sacked the city and captured an immense booty, which, according to Amīr Khusrav, consisted of five hundred and twelve elephants, five thousand horses and five hundred maunds of jewels of various kinds, such as diamonds, pearls, emeralds and rubies. If Amīr Khusrav is to be believed, Malik Nāib advanced as far as Rāmeswaram. He returned to Delhi on the 18th October, 1311, carrying with him vast booty consisting of 612 elephants, 20,000 horses, 96,000 maunds of gold, and some boxes of jewels and pearls. Thus the "country of Ma'bar came under the control of the imperialists" and remained a dependency of the Delhi Sultānate till the early part of Muhammad Tughluq's reign.[1] In 1312 Sankaradeva, son of Rāmchandradeva, withheld the tribute promised by his father to the Delhi Sultān and tried to regain his independence. At this, Malik Nāib again marched from Delhi, and defeated and killed Sankaradeva. Thus the whole of Southern India had to acknowledge the sway of the Delhi Sultān.

But the raids of Malik Nāib, associated with the sack of cities, the slaughter of the people, and the plunder of temples, "made an immense impression" on the indigenous inhabitants of South India.[2] They had no other course but to submit, for the time being, to the mighty forces of the invader, but they must have harboured a feeling of discontent in their hearts, which ultimately found expression in the rise of Vijayanagar as its political fruit.

In his conception of sovereignty, 'Alā-ud-dīn departed from the ideas of his predecessors. He had the courage to challenge for the first time the pre-eminence of the orthodox church in matters of State, and declare that he could act without the guidance of the *Ulemas* for the political interests of his Government. Thus he spoke to Qāzī Mughīs-ud-dīn of Biyāna, who often visited his court and was an advocate of ecclesiastical supremacy: "To prevent rebellion, in which thousands perish, I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the State, and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, disrespectful, and disobey my commands; I am then compelled to be severe to bring them into obedience. I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; whatever I think to be for the good of the State, or suitable for the

[1] This is known from Ibn Batūtah and some coins. *J.R.A.S.*, 1909. pp. 669–70.

[2] Sewell, *Hist. Ins.*, etc., p. 177.

emergency, that I decree." It would be, however, wrong to surmise from this outlook of 'Alā-ud-dīn that he disregarded the religion of Islam. Outside India, he was known "as a great defender of Islam". In India, there was a difference of opinion on this point. While the supporters of clericalism like Barnī and his followers "emphasise his disregard of religion", Amīr Khusrav, who was a man of culture and a shrewd observer of things, considered him to be a supporter of Islam. 'Alā-ud-dīn himself said to the Qāzī: "Although I have not studied the Science or the Book, I am a Mussalmān of a Mussalmān stock." The inscriptions on 'Alā-ud-dīn's monuments also show that he had not lost faith in Islam.

'Alā-ud-dīn acted according to his conviction, and followed a policy of "thorough", calculated to help the establishment of a strong Government at the centre. The rebellion of Ākat Khān, the revolt of the Sultān's sister's sons, Amīr 'Umar and Mangū Khān, in Badāūn and Oudh, the conspiracy of Hājī Maulā and the plots of the "New Mussalmāns", all of which were effectively suppressed, led him to believe that there were some defects in the administrative system. After consulting his intimate advisers, he attributed these to four causes: (i) Disregard of the affairs of the State by the Sultān, (ii) the use of wine, (iii) intimacy and alliances among the nobles, which enabled them to organise themselves for conspiracies, (iv) abundance of money, "which engenders evil and strife, and brings forth pride and disloyalty".

With a strong determination to stamp out these evils and make himself secure against rebellions, the Sultān framed a code of repressive regulations. He first assailed the institution of private property. All pensions and endowments were appropriated to the State, and all villages held in proprietary right (*milk*), in free gift (*inām*) and benevolent endowments (*waqf*) were confiscated. "The people," writes Barnī, "were pressed and amerced, money was exacted from them on every kind of pretence. Many were left without any money, till at length it came to pass that, excepting *maliks* and *amīrs*, officials, Multānis, and bankers, no one possessed even a trifle in cash." Secondly, the Sultān established an efficient body of spies, who were enjoined to report to him everything, even the most trivial matters like the gossip and transactions in the markets. "The system of reporting went to such a length that nobles dared not speak aloud even in the largest places, and if they had anything to say they communicated by signs." Thirdly, the use of spirituous liquor and drugs, and dicing, were strictly prohibited. The Sultān himself showed an example by giving up drinking, and all his wine vessels were broken to pieces. Fourthly,

the Sultān prohibited social gatherings of the nobles, who could not meet without special permission from him. This ordinance was so strictly enforced that "feasting and hospitality fell into total disuse. Through fear of spies, the nobles kept themselves quiet; they gave no parties and had little communication with each other".

Some of the other measures adopted by the Sultān were equally drastic. Large sections of the people had to pay to the State half of their gross produce and heavy pasturage taxes on cattle. The Sultān wanted to reduce them to such a state of misery as to make it impossible for them to bear arms, to ride on horseback, to put on fine clothes or to enjoy any other luxury of life. Indeed, their lot was very hard. None of them "could hold up his head, and in their houses no sign of gold or silver, *tankās* or *jitals*, or any superfluity was to be seen. . . . Driven by destitution, the wives of the *khuts* and *maqaddams* went and served for hire in the houses of the Mussalmāns". For revenue collection, all hereditary assessors and collectors of revenue were made subject to one law, and it was enforced with such great rigour by Sharaf Qāī, the *nāib wazīr* of the Sultān, and his staff, that "men looked upon revenue officers as something worse than fever. Clerkship was a great crime, and no man would give his daughter to a clerk".

'Alā-ud-dīn rightly realised that a strong army was an indispensable requisite for the system of government he had been trying to build up. But its efficient maintenance required a huge expenditure at a time when the influx of wealth from the south had caused a fall in the value of money and augmented the prices of articles. The Sultān fixed the pay of a soldier at 234 *tankās*[1] a year and 78 *tankās* for a man maintaining two horses. He did not want to increase the pay of the soldiers as that would have caused a heavy strain on the resources of the State and of the people, who had already been taxed to the utmost limit of their capacity. But to enable the soldiers to live on a moderate pay, he issued some edicts regulating the prices of all articles from the absolute necessaries of life to things of luxury like slaves, horses, arms, silks and stuffs[2] and adjusting the laws of supply and demand

[1] The value of a *tankā* was a little more than that of a rupee.

[2] The prices of articles were thus fixed:

Wheat . .	per man	7½ jitals	Sugar . .	per seer	1½ jitals
Barley . .	,,	4 ,,	Brown sugar .	,,	¼ ,,
Rice in husk .	,,	5 ,,	Butter . .	2½ seers	1 ,,
Mash . .	,,	5 ,,	Oil of sesamum .	3 ,,	1 ,,
Nakhud (pulse) .	,,	5 ,,	Salt . . .	2½ mans	5 ,,
Moth . .	,,	3 ,,			

as well as possible. The land revenue from the *Khālsa* villages around the capital was to be realised in kind, and grain was to be stored in the royal granaries in the city of Delhi, so that in times of scarcity the Sultān could supply the markets with his own grain. No private hoarding of grain was to be tolerated. The markets were controlled by two officers, the *Diwān-i-Riyāsat* and the *Shahana-i-Mandi*, and a body of spies were entrusted with the task of reporting to the Sultān the condition of the markets. The merchants had to get themselves registered in a State *daftar* and to engage themselves to bring all goods for sale to the *Sarāi 'Adl*, an open place inside the Badāūn gate. They had to furnish sufficient securities for their conduct. Severe punishments were provided against the violation of the Sultān's regulations. To prevent the shopkeepers from using short weights, it was ordered that the equivalent of the deficiency would be cut off from their flesh. The regulations worked according to the Sultān's desire so long as he lived, and enabled him to maintain a large standing army at a cheap cost. Barnī remarks that the "unvarying price of grain in the markets was looked upon as one of the wonders of the time". But he does not definitely state the effects of these devices on the economic condition of the country as a whole.

'Alā-ud-dīn reached the apex of his career by the end of the year 1312. But the tragedy of his life was at hand, and he began henceforth to live by the light of a star that had paled. As Barnī puts it: "Success no longer attended him. Fortune proved, as usual, fickle, and destiny drew her poniard to destroy him." His excesses had undermined his health, his intellect became dwarfed and his judgment defective. He became a mere puppet in the hands of his favourite eunuch, Kāfūr, whom he made the commander of his army and *wazīr*, and indiscreetly removed the old and able administrators. Rebellion broke out in several quarters, and palace-intrigues supervened due to the machinations of Kāfūr, who caused the Sultān's wife and son to be alienated from him. The attack of dropsy, from which the Sultān had been suffering for some time, proved fatal. He expired on the 2nd January, A.D. 1316, at the height of his troubles and was buried in a tomb in front of the Jāmi-'Masjid, Delhi. According to some, "the infamous Malik Kāfūr helped his disease to a fatal end".

'Alā-ud-dīn was a self-willed ruler, whose ambition knew no

Thomas, *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings*, etc., p. 160; Elliot, Vol. III, p. 192. A jital (copper coin) was $\frac{1}{4}$ of a silver *tankā* of 175 grains and corresponded in value to $1\frac{1}{4}$ farthing. One Delhi *man* was equal to 28.8 lbs. avoirdupois and 40 seers made a *man*. Thomas, *Chronicles, etc.*, pp. 160–2.

bounds and brooked no restraint, and whose methods were unscrupulous. "He shed more innocent blood," writes Barnī, "than ever Pharaoh was guilty of."[1] The tragic end of Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz, the treatment meted out to the deceased Sultān's relatives, the severe measures against the "New Mussulmāns", not excepting even women and children, are clear proofs of the Sultān's harsh nature. Extremely suspicious and jealous, he was sometimes ungrateful even to those from whom he had received most valuable services. Thus on being established on the throne, he deprived many of those nobles who had helped his cause of their wealth and establishments, threw them into prison, and caused some of them to be blinded and killed. The remarkable bravery of the Sultān's own general Zafar Khān excited his jealousy, and when he was killed by the Mongols, his master was satisfied that he "had been got rid of without disgrace". Barnī writes that 'Alā-ud-dīn had "no acquaintance with learning",[2] but, according to Ferishta, he learnt the art of reading Persian after his accession.

There flourished during the reign of this Sultān eminent scholars and poets like Amīr Khusrav and Hasan. The Sultān was fond of architecture. Several forts were built by his orders, the most important of these being the circular *'Alāī Fort* or *Koshak-i-Siri*, the walls of which were made of stone, brick and lime and which had seven gates.[3] "All the mosques," writes Amīr Khusrav, "which lay in ruins were built anew by a profuse scattering of silver." In 1311 'Alā-ud-dīn undertook the extension of the *Qutb Mosque* and the construction of a new *Minār* (tower) in the courtyard of the mosque of twice the size of the old *Qutb Minār*. The building of the new *Minār* could not be completed in his lifetime, owing to the troubles during his last days. In 1311 he also caused a large gate to be built for this mosque of red sandstone and marble, with smaller gates on four sides of the large gate.

'Alā-ud-dīn is, however, known to history for his imperialistic activities. He was a brave and able soldier, and the military exploits of his reign were almost uniformly crowned with success. He carried the militaristic ideal of Balban to its logical conclusion. As an administrator also, he showed remarkable vigour in the early part of his reign. To him belongs the credit of governing the State for the first time independent of the authority and

[1] Elliot, Vol. III, p. 156.

[2] Barnī, Elliot, Vol. III, p. 183.

[3] This fort was built in A.D. 1303. Sher Shāh pulled down the fort of Siri and built a new city near Old Delhi. The site of the fort of Siri is now marked by a village named Shāhbād. *Asār-us-Sanādid*, by Sir Syed Ahmad Khān.

guidance of the priestly hierarchy. He was determined to strengthen his government at any cost.

The foundation of the military monarchy that he tried to build up was, however, laid upon sand. His severity enabled him to strengthen it apparently, but it generated a feeling of discontent in the minds of the suppressed baronage and the humiliated chiefs, who naturally remained waiting for opportunities to regain their lost position and power. The great defect of his system was that it could not win for itself the willing support and goodwill of the governed, which is essential for the security of any Government. Its continuance depended on the strong personality of the man who had erected it. As a matter of fact, symptoms of its breakdown appeared during the last days of the Sultān and became fully manifest, to the utter undoing of his work, within a short time after his demise. A just retribution fell upon his family for his ungrateful conduct towards his uncle, and its power and prestige were undermined by one in whom the Sulṭān had reposed profound confidence—his own favourite, Malik Kāfūr.

3. Undue Influence of Kāfūr

As unscrupulous as his master, Kāfūr now tried to establish his influence as the supreme authority in the State. On the second day after the death of 'Alā-ud-dīn, he produced a will of the deceased Sultān, which, if authentic, had been secured from him through undue pressure, disinheriting Khizr Khān and giving the throne to Shihāb-ud-dīn 'Umar, a child of his master, five or six years old. The minor son was enthroned, Kāfūr being his regent and the virtual dictator of the State. Goaded on by the ambition of seizing the throne, Kāfūr perpetrated most horrible crimes. He caused the elder sons of 'Alā-ud-dīn, Khizr Khān and Shādī Khān, to be blinded, and the queen-mother was deprived of her wealth and imprisoned. He also kept Mubārak, the third son of 'Alā-ud-dīn, in confinement in the *Hazar Sutun* (the palace of a thousand pillars) and intended to deprive him of his eyesight. The youth, however, managed to escape. Kāfūr further sought to remove all the nobles and slaves who were supporters of the Khaljīs. But he was soon paid back in his own coin for his atrocities by being murdered, after a "criminal rule" of thirty-five days, by some attendants of the late Sultān 'Alā-ud-dīn. The nobles then brought Mubārak out of his confinement and made him the regent of his minor brother. But after sixty-four days of regency, Mubārak blinded the child in April, 1316, and ascended the throne under the title of Qutb-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh.

4. Qutb-ud-dīn Mubārak and Fall of the Khaljīs

The early years of the new ruler's reign were marked by success, and he rescinded the harsher edicts of his father. Political prisoners were set free, some of the lands and endowments confiscated by the late Sultān were restored to their original grantees and the compulsory tariff was removed. This no doubt gave satisfaction to the people, but, as Barnī writes, "all fear and awe of royal authority disappeared". Further, the Sultān soon plunged himself into a life of pleasure, which naturally made him indolent to the great prejudice of the interests of the State. His example affected the people also. "During (his reign of) four years and four months," writes Barnī, "the Sultān attended to nothing but drinking, listening to music, pleasure, and scattering gifts." He fell completely under the influence of a low-caste (*Parwārī*) convert from Gujarāt, whom he styled Khusrav Khān and made the chief minister of his kingdom. This favourite shamelessly pandered to the low tastes of his master with the ulterior motive of seizing the throne for himself.

Fortunately for Hindustān, the Mongols made no attempt to invade it, nor was there any serious disturbance in any quarter, during this reign. There broke out only two rebellions, one in Gujarāt and the other in Devagiri (in the Deccan). The Gujarāt revolt was effectively suppressed by 'Ain-ul-Mulk, and the Sultān's father-in-law, who had received from him the title of Zafar Khān, was placed as governor there. The Sultān marched in person at the head of a large army against Devagiri. Harapāla Deva of Devagiri fled away on the Sultān's approach, but he was pursued, captured, and flayed alive. Thus the whole kingdom of the Yādavas fell under the control of the Muslims and the Sultān appointed Malik Yaklakī governor of Devagiri. He also deputed Khusrav Khān to lead an expedition to Telingāna, which was attended with success. After one year's stay at Devagiri, where the Sultān built a great mosque, he marched back to Delhi.

These triumphs made Mubārak worse than before. Many members of the imperial family were killed. Mubārak made a departure from the practice of the preceding Sultāns of Delhi by shaking off the allegiance to the Khalifat and proclaiming himself "the supreme head of the religion of Islam, the Khalifah of the Lord of Heaven and Earth", and assumed the pontifical title of *'al-Wāsiq-billāh*.[1]

[1] *Vide* inscriptions on his coins in *J.A.S.B.*, 1875, 1880, 1886; Thomas, *Chronicles*, etc., pp. 179–81; Wright, *Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum*, Vol. II, p. 8 and pp. 43–6.

The regime of this ruler did not, however, last long. Khusrav planned his overthrow, but out of excessive infatuation for him the Sultān did not listen to the warning of his friends. He soon fell a victim to the conspiracy of Khusrav, one of whose *Parwārī* associates stabbed him to death on a night of April, A.D. 1320. Such was the end of the dynasty of the Khaljīs after it had ruled for about thirty years.

5. Usurpation of Khusrav

Khusrav then ascended the throne of Delhi under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Khusrav Shāh and distributed honours and rewards among his relatives and tribesmen, who had helped him in the accomplishment of his design. He squandered away the wealth of the State in trying to conciliate those nobles who had been forced to acquiesce in his usurpation. He inaugurated a veritable reign of terror by massacring the friends and personal attendants of the late Sultān and by putting the members of his family to disgrace. According to Barnī, Yahiyā bin Ahmad Sarhindi and Ibn Batūtah, Khusrav favoured the Hindus, and his brief regime of four months and a few days was marked by the ascendancy of the Hindus. Whatever it might have been, the conduct of Khusrav was enough to offend the 'Alāi nobles, who soon found a leader in Ghāzī Malik, the faithful Warden of the Marches. Marching from Dipālpur, Ghāzī Malik, with the support of all the nobles except 'Ain-ul-Mulk, the governor of Multān, who bore a personal grudge against him, defeated Khusrav at Delhi on the 5th September, 1320. Khusrav was beheaded and his followers were either killed or routed. Though master of the situation, Ghāzī Malik did not occupy the throne at once. Rather, he at first made "a decent profession of reluctance". But as no male descendant of 'Alā-ud-dīn was living, the nobles persuaded him to accept the throne in September, 1320, under the title of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq. It is significant to note that the Muslim nobles, without manifesting any jealousy towards Ghāzī Malik, who had been equal to them in rank, now welcomed him to the throne of Delhi.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOUSE OF TUGHLUQ AND THE BEGINNING OF DISRUPTION

1. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq

THE dynasty of Ghāzī Malik may be regarded as an indigenous one. His father came to Hindustān in the time of Balban and married a Jāt girl of the Punjab. From a humble position, Ghāzī Malik gradually rose to the highest position in the empire by dint of his merit. We have already noted how ably he guarded the frontiers of the Delhi Empire against Mongol invasions till Providence placed him on the throne at an advanced age.

The choice of Ghāzī Malik as the ruler of Delhi by the nobles was amply justified. The situation on his accession was one of difficulty, as the authority of the Delhi Sultānate had ceased to command obedience in its outlying provinces, and its administrative system had disintegrated during the period of confusion following the death of 'Alā-ud-dīn. But he proved himself equal to the occasion. Unlike his predecessors, he possessed strength of character, largely due to his early training in the school of adversity. A devout and god-fearing man, he had a mild and liberal disposition. He "made his court more austere than it had ever been except probably in the time of Balban". He acted with moderation and wisdom. Amīr Khusrav thus praises him:

> "He never did anything that was not replete with wisdom and sense.
> He might be said to wear a hundred doctors' hoods under his crown."

Soon after his accession, Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq set himself to the task of restoring administrative order by removing the abuses of the preceding regime. The extravagances of Mubārak and Khusrav had brought the finances of the State to a deplorable condition. Ghiyās-ud-dīn therefore ordered a strict enquiry to be made into all claims and *jāgīrs*. Unlawful grants were confiscated to the State. The little unpopularity that he incurred by this measure was soon removed by his wise liberality and beneficent

measures for the welfare of his subjects. He appointed upright governors in the provinces, and considerably lightened the burden of revenue by limiting the dues of the State to one-tenth or one-eleventh of the gross produce and providing against official rapacity and extortion. Agriculture, the main industry of the people in this land, received special encouragement. Canals were excavated to irrigate the fields, gardens were planted and forts were built to provide shelter for husbandmen against brigands. But some of the regulations of the Sultān were not marked by the same spirit of benevolence. We know from Barnī that certain sections of the people were to "be taxed so that they might not be blinded with wealth, and so become discontented and rebellious; nor, on the other hand, be so reduced to poverty and destitution as to be unable to pursue their husbandry".

Reforms were introduced in other branches of administration, like justice and police, so that order and security prevailed in the country. The Sultān devised a system of poor-relief and patronised religious institutions and literary men; Amīr Khusrav, his poet laureate, received from the State a pension of one thousand *tankās* per mensem. The postal system of the country was reorganised to facilitate communications and the military department was made efficient and orderly.

Ghiyās-ud-dīn was not unmindful of asserting the authority of the Sultānate over its different provinces. He pursued the Khaljī policy of military domination and imperialism, a reaction against which began in fact with the failure of his successor, Muhammad bin Tughluq. This is strikingly illustrated by what he did in the Deccan and Bengal.

In the Deccan the Kākatīya ruler Pratāparudradeva II of Warangal, who had increased his power during the period of disorder following the death of 'Alā-ud-dīn, refused to pay the stipulated tribute to the Delhi Government. So Ghiyās-ud-dīn sent, in the second year of his reign, an expedition against Warangal under his eldest son and heir-apparent, Fakhr-ud-dīn Muhammad Jauna Khān. The invaders besieged the mud fort of Warangal, which was, however, defended by the Hindus with strong determination and courage. Owing to intrigues[1] and the outbreak of pestilence

[1] According to Barnī and Yahiyā bin Ahmad, who have been followed by later Muslim writers like Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, Badāūnī and Ferishta, these intrigues were due to some traitors in the army. But Ibn Batūtah (Vol. III pp. 208–10) writes that the Crown Prince Jauna, who intended to seize the throne, was responsible for these. Thomas (*Chronicles*, etc., p. 108) and Sir Wolseley Haig (*J.R.A.S.*, 1922, pp. 231–7) accept the opinion of Ibn Batūtah, but Dr. Ishwari Prasad (*History of Qaraunah Turks*, pp. 30–2) has pointed out the unsoundness of the latter view.

in the army, Prince Jauna had to return to Delhi without effecting anything. But again, four months after Jauna's return to Delhi, the Sultān sent a second expedition against Warangal under the same prince. The second attempt met with success. After a desperate fight the Kākatīya ruler surrendered, with his family and nobles, to the enemy. Prince Jauna sent him to Delhi and subjugated the whole country of the Kākatīyas, Warangal being renamed as Sultānpur. The Kākatīya kingdom, though not formally annexed by the Delhi Sultān, soon lost its former power and glory.

A civil war in Bengal among the sons of Shams-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh, who died in A.D. 1318, led Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq to intervene in the affairs of that province. Among the five sons of Shams-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh, Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahādur, who had ruled independently in Eastern Bengal with Sonārgāon as his capital since 1310, Shihāb-ud-dīn Bughrā Shāh, who had succeeded his father on the throne of Bengal with his capital at Lakhnautī, and Nāsir-ud-dīn, contested for supremacy in Bengal. In 1319 Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahādur defeated Shihāb-ud-dīn Bughrā Shāh and seized the throne of Bengal, which was also coveted by Nāsir-ud-dīn, who thereupon appealed to the Delhi Sultān for help. The Sultān availed himself of this opportunity to bring under his effective control the distant province of Bengal, the allegiance of which to the Delhi Sultānate was always loose. He marched towards Lakhnautī in A.D. 1324, captured Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahādur, who was sent as a prisoner to Delhi, and placed Nāsir-ud-dīn on the throne of Western Bengal as a vassal ruler. Eastern Bengal was also made a province of the Delhi Sultānate. On his way back to Delhi, Ghiyās-ud-dīn reduced to submission the Rājā of Tirhut, which became henceforth a fief of the Delhi Sultānate.

But the days of Ghiyās-ud-dīn were numbered. On returning from Bengal he died in February-March, 1325, from the collapse of a wooden structure which his son, Jauna, had built at Afghānpur, at a distance of five or six miles from Tughluqābād, the fortress-city founded by Ghiyās-ud-dīn near Delhi. He was interred in the tomb which he had built for himself at Tughluqābād. There are two accounts about the Sultān's death. Barnī attributes the collapse of the structure to a crash caused by lightning striking it; and Yayihā bin Ahmad Sarhindi also writes that the structure gave way "by divine preordination". But according to Ibn Batūtah, the death of the Sultān was due to a premeditated conspiracy of his son, who got the pavilion so constructed by the royal architect (*Mir 'Imārd*), Ahmad son of Ayāz, that it would collapse on being touched by

elephants. Some later writers like Abul Fazl, Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad and Badāūnī suspect such a conspiracy, and most of the modern writers consider the evidence of Ibn Batūtah's statement to be conclusive, as his informant, Shaikh Rukn-ud-dīn, was in the pavilion on the occasion of the Sultān's tragic death. Barnī's account is evidently partial, and his reticence is due to his desire not to displease Fīrūz Tughluq, who had a great regard for Jauna and during whose reign he wrote his work.

2. Muhammad bin Tughluq

Prince Jauna declared himself as the Sultān three days after his father's death in February-March, 1325, under the title of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Forty days later he proceeded to Delhi and ascended the throne without any opposition in the old palace of the Sultāns, amidst a profuse display of pageantry. Like 'Alā-ud-dīn, he lavishly distributed gold and silver coins among the populace and titles among the nobles.

For studying the history of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign we have besides the admirable history of a contemporary official, Ziā-ud-dīn Barnī, who wrote his work in the time of the Sultān's successor, Fīrūz Shāh, several other Persian works of his near contemporaries like the *Ta'rīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī* by Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf, the *Fatūhāt-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, an autobiographical memoir of Sultān Fīrūz Shāh, the *Munshāt-i-Māhrū* of 'Ain-ul-Mulk Multānī, the *Tughluqnāmah* of Amīr Khusrav, and the *Ta'rīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī* of Yahiyā bin Ahmad Sarhindi, a comparatively late work, which contains much supplementary information. The work of the African traveller, Ibn Batūtah, is also of great importance for the history of this period. He came to India in September, A.D. 1333, and was hospitably received by the Delhi Sultān, who appointed him Chief Qāzī of Delhi, which office he continued to hold till he was sent as the Sultān's ambassador to China in July, A.D. 1342. His account bears on the whole the stamp of impartiality and is remarkable for profuseness of details. The coins of Muhammad bin Tughluq are also of informative value.

Muhammad bin Tughluq is indeed an extraordinary personality, and to determine his place in history is a difficult task. Was he a genius or a lunatic? An idealist or a visionary? A bloodthirsty tyrant or a benevolent king? A heretic or a devout Mussalmān? There is no doubt that he was one of the most learned and accomplished scholars of his time, for which he has been duly praised by Barnī and others. Endowed with a keen intellect, a wonderful

memory and a brilliant capacity of assimilating knowledge, he was proficient in different branches of learning like logic, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and the physical sciences. A perfect master of composition and style, he was a brilliant calligraphist. He had a vast knowledge of Persian poetry and quoted Persian verses in his letters. The science of medicine was not unknown to him. He was also well skilled in dialectics, and scholars thought twice before opening any discussion with him on a subject in which he was well versed. An experienced general, he won many victories and lost few campaigns.

In his private life the Sultān was free from the prevailing vices of the age, and his habits were simple. Possessed of remarkable humility and generosity, he was lavish in distributing gifts and presents. Ibn Batūtah, who has characterised him "as the most humble of men and one who is most inclined towards doing what is right and just", writes that "the most prominent of his qualities is generosity". Writers like Barnī, Yahiya bin Ahmad Sarhindi, and, on their authority, Badāūnī, Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, and Ferishta, have wrongly charged the Sultān with irreligiousness and the slaughter of pious and learned men, scribes and soldiers. Ibn Batūtah asserts that "he follows the principles of religion with devoutness and performs the prayers himself and punishes those who neglect them". This is corroborated by two other contemporary writers, Shihāb-ud-dīn Ahmad and Badr-i-Chāch, and even Ferishta has to admit it. Muhammad bin Tughluq's chief offence was that, probably inspired by the example of the Khaljīs, "he ignored the canon law" as expounded by learned Doctors and based his political conduct on his own experience of the world.

But the Sultān lacked practical judgment and common sense, and, rather obsessed with his theoretical knowledge, indulged in lofty theories and visionary projects. His schemes, though sound in theory, and sometimes showing flashes of political insight, proved to be impracticable in actual operation, and ultimately brought disaster on his kingdom. This was due to certain grave defects in his character. Hasty and hot-tempered, he must have his own way and would brook no opposition. The growing sense of the failure of his policy made him charge the people with perversity and enhanced his severity. Foiled in his aims, the Sultān lost the equilibrium of his mind. "Embarrassment followed embarrassment, and confusion became worse confounded." In course of a talk with Barnī, he exclaimed: "I visit them (the people) with chastisement upon the suspicion or presumption of their rebellious and treacherous designs, and I punish the most

trifling act of contumacy with death. This I will do until I die, or until the people act honestly, and give up rebellion and contumacy. I have no such *wazīr* as will make rules to obviate my shedding blood. I punish the people because they have all at once become my enemies and opponents. I have dispensed great wealth among them, but they have not become friendly and loyal."

These measures of the Sultān, as compared with his brighter qualities, have led some later writers to describe him as "a mixture of opposites". But others again have pointed out that he was not really an "amazing compound of contradictions" and that the charges of "blood-thirstiness and madness" were wrongly brought against him by the members of the clerical party, who always thwarted him in his policy. The Sultān's defects might have been exaggerated, but it cannot be denied that he was devoid of the keen insight of a statesman and thus could not adapt his policy to the sentiments of the people. His daring innovations were not welcome, as these entailed great hardships. He was, in short, a poor judge of human nature, who failed to realise that administrative reforms, however beneficial these may be, cannot be easily imposed on the people against their will and that repression generally breeds discontent if the vital interests of the people are affected. Thus, as Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole observes, "with the best intentions, excellent ideas, but no balance or patience, no sense of proportion, Muhammad Tughlak (*sic*) was a transcendent failure".

Like Philip II of Spain, Muhammad bin Tughluq set himself assiduously to looking into the details of administration from the beginning of his reign. He first ordered the compilation of a register of the land revenue on the model of the register already kept, and the revenue department then worked smoothly. But soon he tried an ill-advised financial experiment in the Doāb, the rich and fertile plain between the Ganges and the Jumnā. He enhanced the rate of taxation and revived and created some additional *abwābs* (cesses). It is not possible to determine accurately the actual amount of additional assessment, owing to discrepancies and vagueness in the accounts of contemporary and later Muslim writers.[1] Some modern writers suggest that the enhancement was not "fundamentally excessive" and did not exceed the maximum of 50 per cent that it had reached under

[1] Barnī (*Ta'rīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, Biblioth. Ind., p. 473) writes ten or twenty times more, which is wrongly translated by Elliot (Vol. III, pp. 182–3) as 10 or 5 p.c. According to *Ta'rīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī* (p. 103), the increment was twentyfold and to this was added *ghari* (house-tax) and the *charāhi* (pasture tax). Badāūnī (Ranking, Vol. I, p. 305) writes that the taxes were doubled.

'Alā-ud-dīn. They also hold that the Sultān's object in levying extra taxes on the people of the Doāb was not "intended to be both a punitive measure (against the refractory inhabitants of the Doāb) and a means of replenishing the treasury", as Badāūnī and, in modern times, Sir Wolseley Haig have suggested, but to "increase his military resources and to organise the administration on an efficient basis". Whatever it might have been, there is no doubt that the measure entailed great miseries on the people of the Doāb, who had already been feeling the burden of heavy taxation since the time of the Khaljīs, especially because it was introduced at a very inopportune moment when a terrible famine visited the land. The State did not relax its demands in view of the famine, but its officers exacted taxes with rigour; and it also took no immediate steps to mitigate the hardships of the toiling peasantry. The Sultān's relief measures, like advancing loans to the agriculturists, sinking wells and "bringing the uncultivated lands under the plough by means of direct state management and financial support", came too late. Agriculture suffered terribly and the impoverished peasantry of the Doāb left their holdings and shifted to other places. In great fury, the Sultān adopted severe reprisals to bring back the reluctant ryots to their work, which produced disastrous consequences for the house of Tughluq.

Muhammad bin Tughluq's decision to transfer the capital in 1327[1] from Delhi to Devagiri, renamed by him Daulatābād, was another ill-calculated step, which ultimately caused immense suffering to the people. This project of the Sultān was not, as some modern writers have suggested, a wild experiment tried with the object of wreaking vengeance on the people of Delhi, but the idea behind it was originally sound. The new capital occupied a central and strategic situation. The kingdom then embraced within its sphere the Doāb, the plains of the Punjab and Lahore with the territories extending from the Indus to the coast of Gujarāt in the north, the whole province of Bengal in the east, the kingdoms of Mālwa, Mahoba, Ujjain and Dhār in the central region, and the Deccan, which had been recently added to it. Such a kingdom demanded close attention from the Sultān. Barnī writes: "This place held a central situation; Delhi, Gujarāt, Lakhnautī, Sātgāon, Sonārgāon, Telang, Ma'bar, Dorasamudra, and Kāmpila were about equidistant from thence, there being but a slight difference in the distances." Further, the new capital was safe from Mongol invasions, which

[1] This date has been established by Dr. Ishwari Prasad (*History of the Qaraunah Turks*, pp. 82–3) on a comparison of contemporary accounts and study of coins.

constantly threatened the old one. The Sultān also did his best to make the new capital a suitable abode for his officers, and the people, by providing it with beautiful buildings, the splendour of which has been described by Ibn Batūtah, 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī, the court historian of Shāh Jahān's reign, and the European travellers of the seventeenth century. All facilities were provided for the intending immigrants. A spacious road was constructed for their convenience, shady trees being planted on both sides of it and a regular post being established between Delhi and Daulatābād. Even Barnī writes that the Sultān "was bounteous in his liberality and favours to the emigrants, both on their journey and on their arrival". In all this, the Sultān acted reasonably.

But when the people of Delhi, out of sentiment, demurred at leaving their own homes which were associated with memories of the past, the Sultān's harsh temper got the better of his good sense, and he ordered all the people of Delhi to proceed *en masse* to Daulatābād with their belongings. We need not believe in the unwarranted statement of Ibn Batūtah that a blind man was dragged from Delhi to Daulatābād and that a bed-ridden cripple was projected there by a ballista. Nor should we literally accept the hyperbolic statement of Barnī that "not a cat or a dog was left among the buildings of the city (of Delhi), in its palaces or in its suburbs". Such forms of expression were common among the medieval writers of India. Complete destruction or evacuation of the city is unthinkable. But the sufferings of the people of Delhi were undoubtedly considerable in a long journey of 700 miles. Worn out with fatigue, many of them died on the way, and many who reached Daulatābād followed suit in utter despair and agony like exiles in a strange land. Such were the disastrous results of the Sultān's miscalculated plan. "Daulatābād," remarks Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole aptly, "was a monument of misdirected energy."

The Sultān, having at last recognised the folly and iniquity of his policy, reshifted the court to Delhi and ordered a return march of the people. But very few survived to return, and Delhi had lost its former prosperity and grandeur, which could not be restored until long after, though the Sultān "brought learned men and gentlemen, tradesmen and landowners, into the city (of Delhi) from certain towns in his territory, and made them reside there". Ibn Batūtah found Delhi in A.D. 1334 deserted in some places and bearing the marks of ruin.

Muhammad bin Tughluq tried important monetary experiments. Edward Thomas has described him as "a Prince of Moneyers"

and writes that "one of the earliest acts of his reign was to remodel the coinage, to readjust its divisions to the altered values of the precious metals, and to originate new and more exact representatives of the subordinate circulation". A new gold piece, called the *Dinār* by Ibn Batūtah, weighing 200 grains, was issued by him. He also revived the *Adali*, equivalent in weight to 140 grains of silver, in place of the old gold and silver coins weighing 175 grains. This change was probably due to a "fall in the relative value of gold to silver, the imperial treasury having been replenished by large quantities of the former metal as a result of the campaigns of the Deccan".

But the most daring of his experiments was the issue of a token currency in copper coins between A.D. 1329 and 1330 for which there had been examples before him in China and Persia. Towards the close of the thirteenth century, Kublai Khān, the Mongol Emperor of China, introduced a paper currency in China, and Gai Khātū, the ruler of Persia, tried it in A.D. 1294. Muhammad bin Tughluq also issued a decree proclaiming that in all transactions copper tokens should pass as legal tender like gold and silver coins. The motives of the Sultān behind this measure were to replenish his exhausted exchequer and find increased resources for his plans of conquest and administration. So he cannot be accused of any device or design to defraud the people.

This "carefully organised measure", however, failed, owing chiefly to two causes. Firstly, it was far in advance of the time and the people could not grasp its real significance. Secondly, the Sultān did not make the issue of the copper coins a monopoly of the State, and failed to take proper precautions against forgery. As Thomas writes, "there was no special machinery to mark the difference of the fabric of the Royal Mint and the handiwork of the moderately skilled artisan. Unlike the precautions taken to prevent the imitation of Chinese paper notes, there was positively no check upon the authenticity of the copper tokens, and no limit to the power of production of the masses at large". The result was that large numbers of counterfeit coins obtained circulation. We are told by Barnī that "the promulgation of this edict turned the house of every Hindu into a mint, and the Hindus of the various provinces coined krores and lacs of copper coins. With these they paid their tribute, and with these they purchased horses, arms and fine things of all kinds. The *rais*, the village headmen and landowners, grew rich and strong upon these copper coins, but the State was impoverished. . . . In those places where fear of the Sultān's edict prevailed, the gold *tankā* rose to be worth a hundred

of (the copper) *tankās*. Every goldsmith struck copper coins in his own workshop, and the treasury was filled with these copper coins. So low did they fall that they were not valued more than pebbles or potsherds. The old coin, from its great scarcity, rose four-fold and five-fold in value". Trade and industries were in consequence severely affected, and confusion reigned supreme. The Sultān recognised his error and repealed his edict about four years after the introduction of the currency. He paid for every copper coin brought to the treasury at its face value in gold and silver coins, and the public funds were thus sacrificed without any corresponding benefit to the State. So many copper coins were brought to Delhi that heaps of them were accumulated at Tughluqābād, which could be seen a century later in the reign of Mubārak Shāh II.

The Delhi Sultānate was not absolutely free from external danger during this reign. In A.D. 1328–1329 the Chaghātaī chief, Tarmāshīrīn Khān, of Transoxiana invaded India. He ravaged the plains of the Punjab and reached the outskirts of Delhi. The change of the capital from Delhi, and probably the weak defence of the north-west frontier by the Delhi rulers, gave him the opportunity for this ambitious design. According to Yahiyā bin Ahmad and Badāūnī, Muhammad bin Tughluq defeated him and drove him out of the country, while Ferishta writes that the Sultān bought him off by paying large presents in gold and jewels, which he describes "as the price of the kingdom". Be that as it may, "the invasion was no more than a raid, and Tarmāshīrīn disappeared as suddenly as he had come".

Like 'Alā-ud-dīn, Muhammad bin Tughluq cherished extravagant visions of universal conquest. Encouraged by some Khurāsānī nobles, who had come to the Sultān's court, being tempted by his lavish generosity, and had their selfish motives to serve, the latter formed, during the early years of his reign, the ambitious design of conquering Khurāsān and Irāk and mobilised a huge army for this purpose. Barnī writes that 370,000 men were enrolled in the *Diwān-i-'arz* or muster-master's office and were paid by the State for one full year. It is indeed true that Khurāsān was then in a state of disorder under its profligate monarch Abu Saīd, which might be taken advantage of by any external enemy. But its conquest was certainly an impossible task on the part of the Sultān of Delhi, whose authority could hardly be regarded as being established on a secure basis throughout his own kingdom, especially in the Deccan. There were also geographical and transport difficulties of no insignificant nature. To mobilise a large army through the passes of the Hindukush or the Himālayas, and arrange for its

provisions in distant lands, were tasks of gigantic magnitude. It is also worthy of consideration how far it was possible for the Delhi soldiers, who had so long gained successes against the weak and divided Indian powers, to measure their strength successfully with the hardy hordes of Central Asia. Further, Tarmāshīrīn Khān the Chaghātaī chief, and the Sultān of Egypt, both of whom coveted the eastern and western frontiers of the distracted Persian Empire, were insincere allies of the Delhi Sultān, more determined to serve their own interests than help him in his projected invasion. Thus the Delhi Sultān's "scheme was impolitic in the highest degree" from every point of view. It had to be abandoned, probably for lack of money. Barnī writes: "The coveted countries were not acquired . . . and his treasure, which is the true source of political power, was expended."

Muhammad bin Tughluq never entertained the fantastic idea of conquering Tibet and China. But Barnī, a contemporary officer, and Ibn Batūtah clearly refer to his design of "capturing the mountain of Kara-jal . . . which lies between the territories of Hind (India) and those of China". Evidently the expedition was directed against some refractory tribes in the Kumāūn-Garhwāl region with the object of bringing them under the control of the Delhi Sultān. A large army was sent from Delhi in the year A.D. 1337–1338 under the command of an able general.

But after an initial success, the Delhi troops suffered terribly owing to geographical difficulties, setting in of the rains, and lack of provisions. Only a few of them (ten according to Barnī, three according to Ibn Batūtah) survived to relate the story of the tragic fate of the expedition. Its immediate objective was, however, gained, as the hillmen came to terms and agreed to pay tribute to the Delhi Sultān.

But the cumulative effect of all the fantastic projects of Muhammad bin Tughluq proved disastrous for him. They caused immense miseries to the people of his kingdom, who were afflicted at the same time by the ravages of famine, and finally exhausted their patience. Popular discontent found expression in open revolts against the Sultān's authority, and his whole reign was distracted by repeated rebellions, which increased the severity of his temper, undermined his prestige and authority, and accelerated the dismemberment of his vast empire.

The two early rebellions were put down with comparative ease, and the insurgents were given exemplary punishments. Bahā-ud-dīn Gurshāsp, sister's son to Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq and so first cousin to Muhammad bin Tughluq, who held the fief of Sāgar, situated about

ten miles north of Shorāpur in the Deccan, refused to recognise the Sultān's authority and rebelled against him in A.D. 1326 or 1327. But he was captured by the imperialists, and sent to Delhi. He was flayed alive there, his dead body was paraded round the city, and his execution was proclaimed by way of warning to others: "Thus shall all traitors to their king perish." A more serious rebellion, which broke out in the next year, was that of Bahrām Aiba, surnamed Kishlū Khān, who held the fiefs of Uch, Sind and Multān. Muhammad bin Tughluq, who was then at Devagiri, marched to Multān by way of Delhi and inflicted a crushing defeat on the rebel in a fight in the plain of Abuhar.[1] The Sultān was inclined to order a general massacre of the inhabitants of Multān, but was restrained from doing so by the saint Rukn-ud-dīn. Bahrām was captured and beheaded and his head was hung up in the gate of the city of Multān by way of warning to persons of rebellious disposition.

But the suppression of these two rebellions did not in any way strengthen the Sultān's position. Rather, from A.D. 1335, his fortunes began to wane and his authority to be openly defied by Hindu chiefs and Muslim governors of provinces, who were even emboldened to assert their independence. Taking advantage of the Sultān's engagements in Northern India, Jalāl-ud-dīn Ahsan Shāh, governor of Ma'bar, proclaimed himself independent in A.D. 1335[2] and struck coins in his own name. The Sultān marched in person against him, but on reaching Warangal, was forced by an outbreak of cholera in his camp to retreat to Daulatābād. Thus came into existence the independent Muslim kingdom of Madura, which existed till A.D. 1377–1378, when it fell before the rising State of Vijayanagar. This kingdom of Vijayanagar was founded according to tradition in A.D. 1336.

In the north, Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh, governor of the province of Bengal, the loyalty of which to the Delhi Sultānate had been always dubious, soon threw off his allegiance to it in A.D. 1338 and struck coins in his own name. The Sultān of Delhi, then preoccupied with other troubles, could do nothing to subdue him, and Bengal thus became an independent province. Rebellions followed in quick succession also in other parts of the Empire, the most formidable one being that of 'Ain-ul-mulk, the governor of Oudh and Zafarābād, in A.D. 1340–41. All these were indeed

[1] Now a small town situated in Fazalkah *tahsil*, Firozepore district, on the South Punjab Railway. For topographical details *vide* Major Raverty's article on *The Mihrān of Sind and its Tributaries*, in *J.A.S.B.*, 1892, Vol. I.

[2] This date has been established by Dr. E. Hultzsch on numismatic evidence. *Vide* his article on *The Coinage of the Sultāns of Madura*, in *J.R.A.S.*, 1909.

put down by the end of the year A.D. 1342, but they badly affected the resources of the State, exhausted the energy of the Sultān and damped his spirits.

In this extremely embarrassing situation, the Sultān sought pontifical recognition to strengthen his waning authority by obtaining a patent from the 'Abbasid Khalifah of Egypt. The desired patent came and Muhammad bin Tughluq caused his name to be replaced by that of the Khalifah on the *Khutba* and the coins. But his object was not fulfilled. The loyalty and confidence of his people had been too rudely shaken to be restored by the force of the Khalifah's patent. In fact, no one had questioned the Sultān's title to the throne; but it was his policy and measures which were not to the liking of his subjects.

Additional difficulties were staring him in the face from different quarters in all their grimness. In the Deccan, rulers like the Kākatīya prince, Kṛishṇa Nāyaka, son of Pratāparudradeva II, Harihara I of Vijayanagar, the Hoysala king Vīra Ballāla IV, son of Ballāla III, and Prolaya Vema, the Reddi chief of Kondavīd, organised a confederacy against his domination in A.D. 1344 and succeeded in bringing Warangal, Dorasamudra, and the country along the Coromandel Coast, out of his grasp. The Sultān's persecution of the "*Centurions*" (*amirān-i-sadah*) aggravated his troubles and "insurrection followed upon insurrection". The foreign Amīrs revolted in Devagiri and the foundation of the Bahmanī kingdom was laid by Abul Muzaffar 'Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh, early in August, 1347. When the Sultān proceeded to quell a disturbance in one part, another broke out in a different quarter. While thus occupied in chasing the rebels in Sind, he was attacked with fever near Tattah and died on 20th March, A.D. 1351. "And so," remarks Badāūnī, "the king was freed from his people and they from their king." In fact, the whole reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq dragged on through baffled aims to a pathetic end, marked by the dismemberment of his vast empire of twenty-three provinces. There can be no doubt that the Sultān himself was largely responsible for this tragedy. Endowed with extraordinary intellect and industry, he lacked the essential qualities of a constructive statesman, and his ill-advised measures and stern policy, enforced in disregard of popular will, sealed the doom of his empire.

3. Fīrūz Shāh, Son of Rajab

The sudden death of Muhammad bin Tughluq near Tattah threw his leaderless army, already embarrassed by the presence of women

and children in the camp, into great confusion and disorder. For two days it was harassed and plundered by the rebels of Sind and the Mongol mercenaries, who had been hired to help the Sultān's army against the rebel Taghī. In this extremity, the nobles urged Fīrūz to ascend the throne and save the dispirited army from destruction. Fīrūz after some hesitation to accept the crown, in which he was probably sincere, submitted to the choice of the nobles, and was proclaimed king, at the age of forty-six, on the 23rd March, 1351. He succeeded in restoring order in the army and set out for Delhi with it. But hardly had he come out of Sind before Khwāja-i-Jahān, the Deputy of the late Sultān, had proclaimed at Delhi a boy as the son and heir of Muhammad bin Tughluq and raised him to the throne. The situation was indeed a critical one for Fīrūz, who, on reaching Multān, held consultations with the nobles and the Muslim jurists. The former refused to admit the existence of any son of Muhammad bin Tughluq and the latter considered Khwāja-i-Jahān's candidate disqualified on the ground of minority. The question was not considered from the legal point of view. It was irrelevant to do so, for in Muslim law sovereignty was not considered to be a matter of "inherited right". As the cause of the boy king was hopeless, Khwāja-i-Jahān soon submitted to Fīrūz, who pardoned him in consideration of his past services and ordered him to go to the fief of Sāmāna to spend his last days there in retirement. But on the way he was beheaded by a follower of Sher Khān, the commandant of Sunām and Sāmāna, at the instigation of his master and other nobles and chiefs of the army. Fīrūz showed weakness in allowing the old officer, of whose innocence he was convinced, to fall a victim to the vengeance of the nobles.

The question as to whether Fīrūz's accession was regular or not is a disputed one. Fīrūz was Muhammad's first cousin, the son of Ghiyās-ud-dīn's younger brother Rajab by his Bhatti wife, who was the daughter of Rānā Mall, the chief of Abuhar. He was trained in the art of government by Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq and Muhammad bin Tughluq, and the latter, according to the contemporary chronicler, Barnī, had left a testament nominating him as his heir-apparent. But the authenticity of this testament has been questioned by Sir Wolseley Haig, who is of opinion that the child whom Khwāja-i-Jahān raised to the throne was not "a supposititious son" of Muhammad bin Tughluq but was an issue of his blood. This view is not shared by some scholars. Whatever it might have been, there is no doubt that the nobles and the jurists selected Fīrūz partly on the ground of necessity. His succession,

according to some, "asserted once more with great force the right of election that had been gradually receding in the background without, however, denying the right of the son to rule. The case also emphasised fitness against merely close relationship to the sovereign".

The task before Fīrūz was indeed a difficult one,—that of raising the Delhi Sultānate from the state of decrepitude and demoralisation into which it had fallen since the closing years of his predecessor's reign. But the new Sultān was ill-fitted for it. He was weak, vacillating and incapable of sustained efforts, and lacked the essential qualities of good generalship. He made no serious attempts to recover the lost provinces of the Empire, and his military enterprises were mostly unsuccessful. In critical moments during his campaigns, he withdrew from them when almost on the point of victory, to avoid shedding the blood of his co-religionists. "His generalship in his two campaigns to Bengal and his eventual reduction of the Thatta, seems," remarks Thomas, "to have been of the lowest order; and the way that he allowed himself to be deluded into the deserts of Cutch, or the defiles of Jājnagar, seems to savour of positive fatuity."

In the east Hājī Iliyās, the independent ruler of Bengal, who had styled himself Shams-ud-dīn Iliyās Shāh, was engaged in extending the frontiers of his kingdom in various directions and "ravaged" those of the Delhi kingdom. Fīrūz thereupon marched from Delhi, at the head of 70,000 horse, in November A.D. 1353 to repel him. On hearing of his advance, Iliyās retreated into the fort of Ikdāla, situated probably at a distance of ten or twelve miles from Pāndua.[1] But he was attacked there by the Delhi troops and defeated. Fīrūz, however, did not reap the full advantage of his hard-earned victory, because without annexing Bengal, which was urged by his commander, Tārtār Khān, he came back to Delhi on 1st September, 1354. There are two different versions regarding the cause of his undignified retreat. According to Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf, the official historian of Fīrūz's reign, the Sultān retreated, being moved by the shrieks and wailings of the women in the besieged fort. But some later writers have attributed it to his apprehension of disasters at the commencement of the rainy season. Whatever might have been the cause of his retreat, one has to agree with Thomas' statement that "the invasion only resulted in the confession of weakness".

[1] The exact site of this fort has not yet been definitely fixed. For detailed accounts of it, *vide Calcutta Review*, 1874; *J.A.S.B.*, 1874; and *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*, Bib. Ind., p. 591 footnote.

Fīrūz made another attempt to reduce Bengal to submission in the course of a few years. He found a pretext for it when Zafar Khān, son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh of Eastern Bengal, fled from Sonārgāon to his court *via* the sea-route and complained to him of the highhandedness of the Bengal ruler. The death of the brave and able ruler, Shams-ud-dīn Iliyās, encouraged Fīrūz to organise an expedition against Bengal. Brushing aside all previous treaties and assurances of friendship, he marched, at the head of a large army, against Sikandar Shāh, the son and successor of Shams-ud-dīn Iliyās, in A.D. 1359. On his way he halted for six months at Zafarābād on the Gumti and founded in its neighbourhood the city of Jaunpur, in memory of his cousin, Fakhr-ud-dīn Jauna (Muhammad bin Tughluq). At the end of the rainy season, he resumed his march towards Bengal. As he sent no response to the friendly negotiations of Sikandar Shāh, the latter, following his father's example, retreated into the mud fortress of Ikdāla. The Delhi troops besieged this fortress, but its reduction did not prove to be child's play. The Bengal troops bravely defended their stronghold, "until the rains drew near and the floods came to help their cause" against the besiegers. A peace was soon concluded on favourable terms for Sikandar. Thus, the second Bengal expedition of the Delhi Sultān was as abortive as the first one. It merely exhibited once more his weak and vacillating nature.

On his way back to Delhi, the Sultān halted for some time at Jaunpur, and then marched against Jājnagar (modern Orissa). The Rāi of this place fled, on the approach of the Delhi troops, towards Telingāna, and soon tendered his submission by surrendering some elephants and promising to send to Delhi a number of elephants annually as tribute. Fīrūz returned to Delhi, undergoing great difficulties and privations, after an absence of two years and a half.

The reduction of the fortress of Nagarkot, which though conquered by Muhammad bin Tughluq in A.D. 1337 had slipped out of Delhi control during the closing years of the Sultān's reign, engaged the attention of Fīrūz shortly after his return to Delhi. On reaching Nagarkot, he besieged the fortress there for six months, when its Rāi submitted to him. Fīrūz's Nagarkot campaign is interesting because of the fact that he caused 300 volumes of Sanskrit books on various subjects, preserved in the temple of Jwālamukhī, to be rendered into Persian verse under the title of *Dalā'il-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, by a court-poet named A'azz-ud-dīn Khālid Khānī.

In 1361–62 Fīrūz resumed the task of conquering Sind, which had been abandoned on the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq about eleven

years back. He marched towards Tattah, the capital of the Jāms of Sind, with 90,000 cavalry, many infantry, 480 elephants, and 5,000 boats. The then ruler of Sind, Jām Bābaniya, decided to meet him and formed a battle army with 20,000 cavalry and 400,000 infantry. The Delhi army suffered greatly, owing to the outbreak of famine and an epizootic disease, which carried off about three-quarters of it. Intending to gather fresh reinforcements, the Sultān retreated to Gujarāt. But being misled by some treacherous guides, he drifted away into the Rann of Cutch, and for six months nothing could be discovered regarding the fate of his army. Additional troops being, however, sent from Delhi by his able minister, Khān-i-Jahān Maqbūl, the Sultān again attacked the Sindians in 1363 and forced them to sue for peace. The Sindians agreed to pay an annual tribute of several lacs of *tankās* to the Sultān and acknowledged allegiance to his authority. But his expeditions to Sind, like his Bengal campaigns, revealed his lack of military ability and tactical skill.

There were no Mongol inroads during the reign of Fīrūz. We are told by Yaḥiyā that the "frontiers of the kingdom were secured by placing them under great armies and the well-wishers of the Emperor".

But no attempt was made by Fīrūz to bring the Deccan under the control of the Delhi Sultānate. When his officers asked him to undertake an expedition to Daulatābād, he, as Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf puts it, "looked distressed and his eyes were suffused with tears, and approving their arguments, he said that . . . he was resolved never more to make war upon men of the Muhammadan faith".

Fīrūz's policy was largely influenced by his religious outlook. He entertained great regard for the Khalifah of Egypt. For the first time in the history of Muslim India he styled himself as his deputy; during the first six years of his reign he twice received a patent of rulership and robes of honour from him; and on his coins his own name was associated with that of the Khalifah. He tried to conduct the affairs of the State according to the theocratic principles of his faith. He encouraged his subjects, belonging to other persuasions, "to embrace the religion" in which he himself found solace, and framed regulations which deviated from the religious policy that had hitherto been pursued by his predecessors.

Probably with a view to conciliating the nobles and the officials, Fīrūz revived the *jāgīr* system, which had been abolished by 'Alā-ud-dīn, and farmed out the whole kingdom among them besides granting them increased salaries and allowances. Though these

measures apparently strengthened the position of the new Sultān, they ultimately served to engender a tendency to decentralisation, which undermined the authority of the central government.

But with all the above-mentioned defects, Fīrūz has a record of some benevolent measures to his credit, and his long reign of about thirty-seven years was a period of comparative prosperity and happiness for the people. He abolished many vexatious and unjust cesses, which had been levied upon the people during the previous reigns, and devised taxation according to the spirit of the Quranic Law. He allowed the imposition of four kinds of taxes sanctioned by the Quran—the *khārāj* or tenth from cultivated lands, the *zakāt* or alms, the *jizya* or poll-tax on the non-Muslims and other heretics, and the *khams* or one-fifth of the spoil and of the produce of mines. In consultation with the canonists, he also levied an irrigation tax (*sharb*) at the rate of 10 per cent of the produce of the fields. The spoils of war were to be shared by the State and the soldiers, as prescribed by the Quran, the former getting one-fifth of the spoil and the latter four-fifths. The merchants were relieved from the payment of some irregular and oppressive *octroi* duties, which obstructed free circulation of merchandise from one part of the country to another. The State officers were strictly warned against demanding anything more than the prescribed dues, and were punished for unjust exactions. The results of these measures were indeed beneficial for trade and agriculture. Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf, though a panegyrist of the Sultān, with whose court he was frequently associated, writes with much truth that, as a result of these regulations, the *ryots* grew rich and were satisfied. "Their homes were replete with grain, property, horses and furniture; everyone had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments and no house without good beds and *divans*. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The State did not suffer from financial bankruptcy during this reign. The revenues of the Doāb amounted to eighty lacs of *tankās* and those of the territories of Delhi to six crores and eighty-five lacs of *tankās*." Prices of the articles of common consumption also became low.[1]

The construction of a system of irrigation canals contributed greatly towards the improvement of agriculture. Two streams are mentioned by Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf to have been excavated under the orders of Fīrūz—one from the Sutlej and the other from the

[1] The prices of articles have been thus stated by Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf:

Wheat . .	1 man	8 jitals	Dal . . .	10 seers	1 jitals
Barley . .	,,	4 ,,	Ghee . .	1 seer	2½ ,,
Grain . .	,,	4 ,,	Sugar . .	,,	3½ ,,

Jumnā. But Yahiyā, who, as an inhabitant of Sirhind, had a better knowledge of the canal system, writes of four canals being constructed during this reign: (*a*) one from the Sutlej to the Ghaghar, (*b*) a second opened in the vicinity of the Mandavī and Sirmur hills, and joined by seven creeks, was extended as far as Hānsī, and thence to Arasanī, where the foundation of the fort of Hissār Fīrūzā was laid, (*c*) the third flowing from the Ghaghar by the fort of Sirsuti went up to the village of Hirani-Khera, (*d*) and the fourth being excavated from the Jumnā was extended to Fīrūzābād and then passed further beyond it. Fīrūz employed skilled engineers to superintend the canals, and especially to examine and report on them during the rainy season. Another beneficial step on his part was the reclamation of waste lands, the income accruing from which was spent for religious and educational purposes.

Fīrūz's building and gardening activities indirectly benefited the people. He had a great passion for building new cities and renaming old ones. He himself says: "Among the many gifts which God bestowed upon me, His humble servant, was a desire to erect public buildings. So I built many mosques and colleges and monasteries, that the learned and the elders, the devout and the holy, might worship God in these edifices, and aid the kind builder with their prayers." He founded the town of Jaunpur, Fatehābād, Hissār, Fīrūzpur near Badāūn, and Fīrūzābād, at a distance of ten miles from his capital. During his Bengal campaigns, he renamed Ikdāla "*Azadpur*" and Pāndua "*Fīrūzābād*". He constructed or restored a number of mosques, palaces, *sarāis*, reservoirs, hospitals, tombs, baths, monumental pillars and bridges. The chief architect of the State was Malik Ghāzī Sahana, who was helped by 'Abdul Huq. The Sultān's interest in gardening led him to lay out 1,200 new gardens near Delhi and restore thirty old gardens of 'Alā-ud-dīn. He also removed two inscribed monoliths of Aśoka to Delhi—one from a village near Khizrābād on the upper Jumnā and the other from Meerut.

While conforming to the principles of the Quranic law in the administration of justice, Fīrūz tried to make the judicial system more humane than before. We have in his own words: "In the reigns of former kings . . . many varieties of torture were employed. Amputation of hands and feet, ears and noses; tearing out the eyes, pouring molten lead into the throat, crushing the bones of the hands and feet with mallets, burning the body with fire, driving iron nails into the hands, feet, and bosom, cutting the sinews, sawing men asunder; these and many similar tortures were practised. The great and merciful God made me, His servant, hope and seek

for His mercy by devoting myself to prevent the unlawful killing of Mussalmāns, and the infliction of any kind of torture upon them or upon any men." Some benevolent measures were also adopted by him for the general welfare of the people, who, according to all contemporary writers, held him in great respect. He tried to solve the unemployment problem by starting an employment bureau, and providing employment for as many as possible after a thorough enquiry into each man's merit and capacity. He further established a charity bureau (*Diwān-i-Khairāt*), through which pecuniary help was distributed for the marriage of girls of needy Muslims, chiefly of the middle class, and for the benefit of widows and orphans. He founded a charitable hospital (*Dār-ul-Shafā*), where medicines and diet were supplied by efficient physicians at the cost of the State.

Fīrūz did not issue absolutely new varieties of coins. The coins prevalent during his reign had already been in circulation in the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Even the *Shashghani* or six-jital piece, which is especially attributed to him by 'Afif, has been referred to by Ibn Batūtah. But credit must be conceded to him for having introduced two fractions of mixed copper and silver coinage—half and quarter jitals, described as *adhā* (half) and *bikh* respectively. These mixed pieces facilitated the transactions of the common people and gave the coinage considerable metallic strength. But much of their utility was spoiled by fraud and peculation in the working of the mint.

The army of the State was organised on a feudal basis. The regular soldiers of the army received grants of lands, sufficient for their comfortable living, and the irregulars (*ghairwajh*) were paid direct from the royal treasury. Those who did not get their salaries in either of these ways, were supplied with transferable assignments on the revenue. The last method of payment proved to be a source of great abuse. The assignments were purchased in the capital by some middle-men at one-third of their value, and they sold them to the soldiers in the districts at one-half. Thus a class of people made clandestine gains, without any labour on their part, at the expense of the soldiers. The State army consisted of eighty or ninety thousand cavalry, which could be reinforced by the retainers of the nobles. But it is doubtful if the army was really efficient. Its strength must have been greatly undermined by the Sultān's unwise generosity towards the soldiers. He passed a new regulation to the effect that when a soldier became incapable of service in the field through old age, his son, or son-in-law, or slave, should step into his place. The recognition of this

hereditary claim in military services, irrespective of any consideration of fitness, was undoubtedly a pernicious practice.

The reign of Fīrūz was marked by an unprecedented rise in the number of slaves,[1] for whom the State maintained a separate establishment. The fief-holders in different parts of the kingdom made presents of slaves to the Sultān, for which corresponding deductions were made from the taxes payable by them to the Government. Thus the institution of slavery entailed a heavy loss on the central exchequer.[1]

Though generally opposed to gorgeous display, Fīrūz, like his predecessors, maintained a magnificent and luxurious court, which was, as Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf says, especially decorated during the *Id* and *Shabrāt* festivals. There were also thirty-six royal establishments, each having a separate staff of officers to look after its affairs. The expenses for the maintenance of the court and the household establishments of the Sultān must have been considerable.

Fīrūz's minister, Khān-i-Jahān Maqbūl, exercised a potent influence in the affairs of the State. He was originally a Hindu of Telingāna but subsequently embraced Islam and had an official career under Muhammad bin Tughluq before he rose to this eminent position in the reign of Fīrūz. He died in A.D. 1370 and was succeeded in his office and emoluments by his son, Jūna Shāh, who also received his title. On the death of Zafar Khān, the governor of Gujārat, in the next year, his son, Daryā Khān, succeeded him in his office. Later the Sultān received a severe shock from the death of his eldest son, Fath Khān, on the 23rd July, 1374. This gravely affected both his mind and body.

As was the case with most of the Sultāns of Delhi, the last days of Fīrūz were far from peaceful. His judgment failed as he advanced in age, and the efficiency of the government declined. He committed a blunder in trying to share authority with his eldest surviving son, Muhammad Khān, an incompetent youth, who gave himself up to pleasures instead of looking after the administration of the State. A civil war ensued even during the lifetime of the Sultān, and Muhammad Khān fled towards the Sirmūr hills. Fīrūz then conferred the royal title, and the position held by Muhammad Khān, on his grandson, Tughluq Khān, son of the deceased Fath Khān, before he died on the 20th September, 1388.

Contemporary Indian writers are unanimous in admiring the virtues of Fīrūz Shāh. In their opinion, no king, since the time of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, had been "so just and kind, so

[1] According to Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf the number of slaves in the capital and the provinces rose to 180,000. Elliot, Vol. III, p. 341.

courteous and God-fearing, or such a builder" as Fīrūz was. Fīrūz indeed possessed excellent qualities of heart, such as affection and benevolence; and his reign was marked by peace and prosperity. But his indiscriminate generosity and concessions contributed in no small degree to the dismemberment of the Delhi Sultānate in the long run. His revival of the *jāgīr* system also produced a tendency towards decentralisation to the prejudice of the integrity of the State.

4. The Successors of Fīrūz Shāh, Son of Rajab

The immediate successor of Fīrūz was his grandson, Tughluq Shāh, who assumed the title of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq Shāh II. He soon fell a victim to a conspiracy of some officers and nobles on the 19th February, A.D. 1389. The nobles at Delhi then acclaimed his cousin, Abu Baqr, as the Sultān. At the same time the partisans of Fīrūz's son, Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad, proclaimed him king at Sāmāna on the 24th April, 1389. Abu Baqr was forced to surrender to his rivals, and was deposed, in December 1390. Largely owing to the strain of his struggle against various difficulties, the health of Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad declined and he died in January 1394. Then came the brief reign of his son, Humāyūn, who died on the 8th March following. The next and the last ruler of the Tughluq dynasty was Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, the youngest son of Muhammad. His rival, Nusrat Shāh, a son of Fath Khān, the eldest son of Fīrūz, made an attempt to gain the throne at the instigation of some nobles, but it proved futile and he was treacherously put to death.

All the successors of Fīrūz were weaklings and utterly incompetent to save the Delhi Sultānate from disruption, the symptoms of which had already appeared. They were mere puppets in the hands of some unscrupulous nobles, whose selfish intrigues largely fomented the civil wars among the rival claimants to the throne of Delhi. These told heavily upon the prestige and resources of the State, with the result that its authority began to be defied almost everywhere by the Muslim governors and Hindu chiefs. The eunuch Malik Sarvar, who had persuaded Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd to bestow upon him the title of *Malik-ush-Sharq*, or Lord of the East, founded the independent kingdom of Jaunpur; the Khokars revolted in the north; the provinces of Gujarāt, Mālwa, and Khāndesh became independent States; Muslim principalities were established in Biyāna and Kalpi and a Hindu principality in Gwālior; the chief of Mewāt transferred his nominal allegiance from one prince to another at his own sweet will; and the Hindus of the Doāb were almost constantly in revolt.

5. Invasion of Tīmūr

Such was the distracted and chaotic condition of the kingdom of Delhi when Amīr Tīmūr, one of the most terrible military leaders known to history, invaded India. Amīr Tīmūr, son of Amīr Turghay, chief of the Gurkan branch of the Barlās Turks, was born at Kesh in Transoxiana in A.D. 1336. He ascended the throne of Samarqānd in 1369 and then launched on a career of aggressive conquests in Persia, Afghānistān and Mesopotamia. The wealth of India naturally excited the temptation to invade this land, for which the disintegration of the Delhi kingdom afforded him a suitable opportunity. He used his championship of the faith as a pretext to win the support of the nobles and warriors, who were not in favour of his meditated invasion of this distant land.

Early in 1398 Pīr Muhammad, a grandson of Tīmūr, besieged Multān and captured it after six months. Tīmūr left Samarqānd in April, 1398, at the head of a large army, and having crossed the Indus, the Jhelum and the Rāvī in September, appeared before Talamba, situated about seventy miles to the north-east of Multān, on the 13th October of the same year. He sacked Talamba and massacred or enslaved its inhabitants. After capturing several places on his way and massacring many of their inhabitants, he advanced to the outskirts of Delhi by the end of the first week of December, and butchered there about 100,000 adult male captives in cold blood. Sultān Mahmūd and Mallū Iqbāl endeavoured to oppose him there on the 17th December with a large army consisting of 10,000 cavalry, 40,000 infantry and 120 elephants, clad in armour. But they were hopelessly defeated and took to their heels, Mallū fleeing to Baran and Mahmūd to Gujarāt.

On the next day Tīmūr entered the city of Delhi, which was given up to pillage and rapine for several days. Many of the inhabitants of this unfortunate city were either brutally massacred by the ferocious Turki soldiers or made captives, and the artisans among them were sent to Samarqānd to build there the famous Friday Mosque which Tīmūr himself had designed. Thus a tragic fate overtook the capital city of the Sultāns of Delhi.

Tīmūr had no desire to stay in India. After halting at Delhi for fifteen days, he returned through Fīrūzābād (1st January, 1399), stormed Meerut (9th January,) on the way and advancing further north defeated two Hindu armies in the neighbourhood of Hardwār in January. Marching along the Siwālik Hills, he captured Kāngra (16th January) and sacked Jammu, the inhabitants of those places being slaughtered in large numbers.

He appointed Khizr Khān Sayyid to the government of Multān, Lahore and Dīpālpūr, and recrossed the Indus on the 19th March, "after inflicting on India more misery than had ever before been inflicted by any conqueror in a single invasion".

Nature also proved cruel to the people of Delhi at this critical time and added to their miseries caused by the ravages of bloody wars and devastations. "At this time," writes Badāūnī, "such a famine and pestilence fell upon Delhi that the city was utterly ruined, and those of the inhabitants who were left died, while for two months not a bird moved a wing in Delhi." Tīmūr, in short, completed the dissolution of the Tughluq kingdom, the vitality of which had already been sapped by internal cankers. Bengal had long been independent; Khwāja Jahān had been ruling over an independent kingdom comprising Kanauj, Oudh, Kara, Dalmau, Sandila, Bahraich, Bihār and Jaunpur; in Gujarāt, Muzaffar Shāh owed no allegiance to anybody; in Mālwa, Dilāwar Khān exercised royal authority; the Punjab and Upper Sind were held by Khizr Khān as Tīmūr's viceroy; and Ghālib Khān had established his power in Sāmāna, Shams Khān Auhadi in Bayāna, and Muhammad Khān in Kālpī and Mahoba. To make confusion worse confounded, the decay of political authority in Delhi emboldened the unscrupulous nobles and adventurers to indulge more and more in base intrigues. Some of them helped Nusrat Shāh, who had been so long lurking in the Doāb, to take possession of Delhi in 1399, but he was defeated and expelled from that city by Mallū Iqbāl. On returning to Delhi in 1401, Mallū Iqbāl extended an invitation to Sultān Mahmūd, who had found shelter at Dhār after experiencing many bitter humiliations in Gujarāt, to return to Delhi. He thought that the "prestige of the fugitive Mahmūd Shāh would be useful to him". Sultān Mahmūd returned to Delhi only to remain as a puppet in the hands of Mallū Iqbāl till the latter's death in a fight with Khizr Khān, the governor of Multān, Dīpālpūr and Upper Sind, on the 12th November, 1405. Being a weak king, Mahmūd could not make proper use of his restored position. He died at Kaithal in February, 1413, after a nominal sovereignty of about twenty years, and with him the dynasty founded by Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq came to an ignominious end.

CHAPTER V

DISINTEGRATION OF THE DELHI SULTĀNATE

1. Delhi : The Sayyids and the Lodīs

A. The so-called Sayyids

After the death of Sultān Mahmūd, the nobles of Delhi acknowledged Daulat Khān Lodī, the most powerful of their number, as the ruler of Delhi. But he was destined to hold power only for a few months. In March, A.D. 1414, Khizr Khān, governor of Multān and its dependencies on behalf of Tīmūr, marched against him and took possession of Delhi by the end of May of the same year. Daulat Khān was sent as a prisoner to Hissār Fīrūzā. Some historians represent Khizr Khān as a descendant of the Prophet, and the dynasty founded by him has accordingly been styled the Sayyid Dynasty. But the arguments in favour of this claim seem to be very doubtful, though Khizr's ancestors might have originally hailed from Arabia. Khizr did not assume the insignia of royalty but professed to rule as a viceroy of Tīmūr's fourth son and successor, Shāh Rukh, to whom he is said to have sent tribute. His tenure of power for seven years was not marked by any striking event. The extent of the old Delhi kingdom had then been reduced to a small principality, and the authority of its ruler was limited to a few districts round Delhi. Even in those parts, it was frequently challenged by the Hindu zamindārs of Etāwah, Katehr, Kanauj, Patiālī and Kampila. Khizr Khān and his loyal minister, Tāj-ul-mulk, who was also an intrepid fighter, struggled hard against these chronic disorders till the latter died on the 13th January, 1421, and the former on the 20th May, 1421. Ferishta extols Khizr Khān as "a just, a generous and a benevolent prince", but he was not a strong ruler. Owing to the efforts Khizr Khān made, "there were, of course, the ordinary concessions to expediency . . . submission (by the insurgents) for the moment in the presence of a superior force, insincere professions of allegiance, temporising payments of tribute, or desertion of fields and strongholds easily regained; but there was clearly no material advance in public security or in the supremacy of the Central Government".

Mubārak Shāh, whom his father, Khizr Khān, had nominated as his heir on his death-bed, ascended the throne of Delhi on the very day of the latter's death, with the consent of the Delhi nobles. It was during his reign that Yahiyā bin Ahmad Sarhindi wrote his *Ta'rīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī*, which is a valuable source-book for the history of this period. But his reign is as uneventful and dreary as that of his father. There is nothing of importance to record except some punitive expeditions to suppress disorders, which compelled the Sultān to accompany his armies. He was able to subdue the rebellions at Bhātinda and in the Doāb and recover balances of tribute from a limited area. But the brave Khokars grew more and more powerful and harassed him more than once. Their chief, Jasrat, confidently aspired to the establishment of their supremacy on the ruins of the Delhi kingdom. The Hindu nobles enhanced their influence in the Delhi court itself. On the 19th February, 1434, the Sultān fell victim to a conspiracy, organised by some Muslim as well as Hindu nobles under the leadership of the discontented *wazīr* Sarvar-ul-mulk, when he proceeded to superintend the construction of a newly planned town, called Mubārakābād, on the Jumnā.

The nobles of Delhi then raised Muhammad, a grandson of Khizr Khān and the heir-designate of the late murdered Sultān, to the throne of Delhi. But he also became "the victim of factions and the sport of circumstances". Even when he had the opportunity to display his capacity for rule after the death of the unscrupulous *wazīr* Sarvar-ul-mulk, he abused it in such a manner as to forfeit the confidence of those who had delivered him from the hands of his enemies. Buhlūl Khān Lodī, the governor of Lahore and Sirhind, who had come to help the Sultān when Mahmūd Shāh Khaljī of Mālwa had advanced as far as the capital, soon made an attempt to capture Delhi. Though it failed for the time being, the condition of the Sayyids gradually passed from bad to worse. As Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad writes, "the affairs of the State grew day by day more and more confused, and it so happened that there were nobles at twenty *krohs* from Delhi, who threw off their allegiance (to the tottering Empire) and engaged themselves in preparations for resistance to it". After the death of Muhammad Shāh in A.D. 1445,[1] the nobles declared his son to be the ruler of the shattered kingdom, which now consisted only of the city of Delhi and the neighbouring villages, under the title of 'Alā-ud-dīn 'Ālam Shāh. The new ruler was more feeble and inefficient than his father. He made over the throne of Delhi to Buhlūl Lodī in

[1] There are differences of opinion regarding this date.

1451 and retired in an inglorious manner to his favourite place, Badāūn, where he spent the rest of his life, absorbed in pleasure, probably without any regret for his surrender of the throne, till his death.

B. The Lodīs

Buhlūl Khān belonged to the Lodī tribe of Afghāns. He was a nephew of Sultān Shāh Lodī, who had been appointed governor of Sirhind with the title of Islām Khān after the death of Mallū Iqbāl. On the death of his uncle, Buhlūl became the governor of Lahore and Sirhind. When 'Alā-ud-dīn 'Ālam Shāh voluntarily abdicated the throne of Delhi, he seized it on the 19th April, 1451, with the support of the minister Hamīd Khān. Thus, for the first time in the history of India, an Afghān ruler was seated on the throne of Delhi.

Buhlūl was called upon to rule over a mere fragment of the Delhi kingdom, which again was then in a highly distracted condition. But he was made of a different stuff from that of his immediate predecessors. Born of a fighting clan, he was active, warlike, and ambitious, and was determined to restore the strength of the Sultānate. He got rid of the influence of the old minister Hamīd Khān by cleverly throwing him into prison with the help of his Afghān followers. He also frustrated an attempt on the part of Mahmūd Shāh Sharqī of Jaunpur to get possession of Delhi, and reduced to submission some provincial fief-holders and chieftains, who had enjoyed independence for several years. Thus Ahmad Khān of Mewāt, Dariyā Khān of Sambhal, 'Isā Khān of Koīl, Mubārak Khān of Suket, Rājā Pratāp Singh of Mainpurī and Bhongāon, Qutb Khān of Rewarī, and the chiefs of Etāwah, Chandwār and other districts of the Doāb, were compelled to acknowledge the authority of the Sultān, who, however, treated them with leniency so that they might be reconciled to his rule. His more significant achievement was the successful war against the neighbouring kingdom of Jaunpur, the independence of which was extinguished. He appointed his eldest surviving son, Bārbak Shāh, viceroy of Jaunpur in 1486. While returning from Gwālior after chastising its Rājā, Kirat Singh, the Sultān fell ill; and in the midst of intrigues for succession to the throne among the partisans of his sons, Bārbak Shāh and Nizām Shāh, and grandson, A'zam-i-Humāyūn, he breathed his last by the middle of July 1489, near the town of Jalālī.

As a ruler, Buhlūl was incomparably superior to those who had preceded him on the throne of Delhi since the time of Fīrūz of the house of Tughluq. Possessed of courage, energy and tact, he

restored the prestige of the Muslim power in Hindustān and infused some vigour into the government of his kingdom. Averse to display of royal splendour, he was kind to the poor, and though not a learned man himself, was a patron of scholars. He enjoyed the love and confidence of his near relatives and fellow tribesmen, who were allowed to share with him his power and prosperity.

After Buhlūl's death, his second son, Nizām Khān, was proclaimed king at Jalālī, under the title of Sultān Sikandar Shāh, on the 17th July, 1489. His succession was disputed, as some of the nobles suggested the name of Bārbak Shāh; but their proposal came to nothing as Bārbak was then at a distant place. Endowed with considerable energy and vigour, Sikandar amply justified the choice of the minority among the nobles. He made earnest efforts to increase the strength of the kingdom by removing the disorders and confusion into which it had been thrown during the preceding reigns, due largely to the refractoriness of the provincial governors, chieftains, and zamindārs. He took care also to check the accounts of the leading Afghān *jāgīrdārs*, much against their will. Marching to Tirhut and Bihār, he asserted his authority as far as the confines of Bengal; appointed Dariyā Khān to the government of Bihār; compelled the Rājā of Tirhut to pay him tribute; and concluded a treaty with 'Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh of Bengal, by which both agreed not to encroach on each other's dominion. The chiefs of Dholpur, Chanderī, and some other places, also tendered submission to him. With the object of controlling the chiefs of Etāwah, Biyāna, Koīl, Gwālior and Dholpur in an effective manner, he founded a new town in 1504 on the site where the modern city of Āgra stands. Striving till his last days to enforce obedience from the hostile chiefs, the Sultān breathed his last at Āgra on the 21st November, A.D. 1517.

Sikandar was undoubtedly the ablest of the three rulers of his dynasty. He has been highly praised by contemporary as well as some later writers for his excellent qualities of head and heart. A firm, vigilant, and upright ruler, he entertained kind feelings in his heart for the poor and the needy, patronised learned men, and himself wrote some Persian verses. He dispensed justice with strict impartiality and personally heard the complaints of even the poorest of his subjects. The efficiency of his government chiefly contributed to the prevalence of peace and prosperity in his kingdom, and the prices of the articles of prime necessity became excessively low. He was, however, not free from religious intolerance, which led him to commit some impolitic acts.

After the death of Sikandar, his eldest son, Ibrāhīm, was elevated

to the throne at Āgra on the 21st November, 1517. A faction of the nobility advocated a partition of the kingdom and set up Ibrāhīm's younger brother, Jalāl Khān, on the throne of Jaunpur. But Ibrāhīm frustrated their attempt, whereupon Jalāl fled from Jaunpur but was captured on the way and assassinated by the Sultān's orders. The new Sultān possessed military skill, but lacked good sense and moderation, and this ultimately brought about his ruin. With a view to securing strength and efficiency, he unwisely embarked upon a policy of repression towards the powerful nobles of the Lohānī, Formulī and Lodī tribes, who constituted the official class of the State. By his stern measures he alienated the sympathies of the Afghān nobility and drove them to disloyalty, which manifested itself in absolute defiance of his authority. This embittered the Sultān more and more and increased the severity of his measures towards the nobles. But the latter lost their patience; and soon those of Bihār declared their independence under Dariyā Khān Lohānī. The discontent of the nobles was brought to a head by Ibrāhīm's unsympathetic treatment of Dilwār Khān, son of Daulat Khān Lodī, the semi-independent governor of Lahore. Daulat Khān Lodī and 'Ālam Khān, an uncle of Sultān Ibrāhīm and a pretender to the throne of Delhi, invited Bābur, the Tīmūrid ruler of Kābul, to invade India. Thus revenge and ambition, persecutions and disaffection, brought about the final collapse of the decadent Delhi Sultānate and paved the way for the establishment of a new Turkish rule in India.

Indeed, the fall of the Delhi Sultānate was inevitable under the conditions which had their birth in the last days of Muhammad bin Tughluq. The indiscretions of that Sultān brought on a process of disintegration, which was accelerated by the weakness and impolitic measures of his immediate successor, Fīrūz Shāh, such as the revival of the *jāgīr* system, the extension of the institution of slavery, the imposition of *jizya* on the non-Muslims and persecution of the heretical Muslim sects. This process could not be checked by the weak Sayyids and unstatesmanlike Lodīs. In spite of some military successes to their credit, the Lodīs failed to introduce any wholesome and strong element in the administrative structure, and committed a fatal blunder by making an attempt to suppress the military and official nobility by a policy of repression. An external calamity, which might very well be regarded as a symptom of the growing decline of the Delhi Sultānate, hastened its end. While internal dissensions had been eating into its vitality, the invasion of Tīmūr destroyed its coherence and increased the selfish intrigues of the nobility, who, like the feudal baronage of later

medieval Europe, plunged the whole kingdom into disorder and confusion which it was beyond the capacity of the weak rulers of Delhi to remove by prudent measures. Further, the Tughluqs, and their successors, did nothing to introduce such reforms as could lead to the growth of a unified State in a country like India, where, during the Middle Ages, the sense of social solidarity or of territorial and political unity had hardly grown. Thus the military autarchy of the Turks and the Afghāns could enforce obedience among the governors and peoples of the different provinces only so long as it could retain its vigour. As soon as the central authority grew weak, the centrifugal tendencies, so common in the history of India, made headway, and a number of independent kingdoms arose on the ruins of the Delhi Sultānate. Their history may now be studied in brief.

2. Bengal

The control of the Delhi Sultāns over Bengal was always dubious, and it was one of the earliest provinces to assert its independence. Its distance from Delhi, and its profuse wealth, often tempted its governors to rebel against the central authority, which, as has already been noted, caused much trouble to Iltutmish and Balban. Under the descendants of Balban it was virtually independent of the Delhi Government, whose control wås again asserted only in the time of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq, who defeated Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahādur Shāh and divided the province into three independent administrative divisions with their capitals at Lakhnautī, Sātgāon, and Sonārgāon respectively. Soon after his accession, Muhammad bin Tughluq appointed Qadr Khān to the government of Lakhnautī, 'Izz-ud-dīn A'zam-ul-mulk to that of Sātgāon, and restored Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahādur Shāh to the government of Sonārgāon but associated with him his own foster-brother, Tārtār Khān, better known as Bahrām Khān. This partition of Bengal did not, however, serve to remove the chronic troubles in that province. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Bahādur soon revolted and issued coins from the mints at Sonārgāon and Ghiyāspur. But he was soon defeated and killed, and Bahrām Khān became the sole governor at Sonārgāon. Bahrām Khān died in A.D. 1336, whereupon his armour-bearer, Fakhr-ud-dīn, immediately proclaimed himself ruler of Sonārgāon under the title of Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh. Shortly 'Alā-ud-dīn 'Ālī Shāh (A.D. 1339–1345) made himself independent in Northern Bengal, and removed his capital from Lakhnautī to Pāndua. It has been asserted on the evidence of some coins that Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh died a natural death after an unbroken reign

of ten years[1] and was succeeded on the throne of Sonārgāon by Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Ghāzī Shāh, who was most probably his son.

Ultimately Hājī Iliyās, foster-brother of 'Alā-ud-dīn 'Ālī Shāh, made himself the independent ruler of the entire province of Bengal, about A.D. 1345, under the title of Shams-ud-dīn Iliyās Shāh. Soon after his accession he extended his power in different directions. It appears that after annexing the eastern kingdom of Sonārgāon in A.D. 1352 he exacted tribute from the kingdoms of Orissa and Tirhut and went as far as Benares. Thus his activities proved to be a menace to the Delhi kingdom on its eastern frontier, and it was during his reign that Fīrūz of the house of Tughluq made an attempt to recover the lost province of Bengal, which, however, ended in failure. Iliyās died at Pāndua in A.D. 1357. His reign was marked by peace and prosperity, which "are attested by the inauguration of a national and typical coinage, and by the growth of a taste for the arts of peace, especially architecture".

Iliyās was succeeded by his son, Sikandar Shāh, early in whose reign the Delhi Sultān made a second attempt to recover Bengal but had to return disappointed. After a prosperous reign of about thirty-six years, Sikandar died, most probably in October, 1393, in the course of a fight with his son, Ghiyās-ud-dīn A'zam, at Goālpārā near Pāndua. That his reign was prosperous is well attested by his building of the magnificent mosque at Ādīna and by the large number, variety, and richness of the designs of his coins. The next ruler, Ghiyās-ud-dīn A'zam, was a correspondent of the famous poet Hāfiz. He was an able prince, having a profound regard for law. He received an embassy from Yung-lo, rival of the Emperor Hui-ti of China, in A.D. 1408, and in A.D. 1409 sent one in return. Ghiyās-ud-dīn A'zam Shāh died in A.D. 1410 after a reign of about seventeen years and was succeeded by his son, Saif-ud-dīn Hamza Shāh. But about this time, Rājā Ganesh, a Brahmin zamindār of Bhātūriā and Dinājpur, rose to power and Hamza ruled as a nominal king for one year and a few months. According to the Muslim historians, Ganesh ruled Bengal as an independent king and abdicated in favour of his son Jadu, who subsequently embraced Islam and assumed the title of Jalāl-ud-dīn

[1] Bhattasali, *Independent Sultans of Bengal*, p. 17. The Muslim chroniclers give different accounts about Fakhr-ud-dīn's death. The author of *Riyāz* writes that he was killed by 'Alā-ud-dīn 'Ālī Shāh; Badāūnī states that Muhammad bin Tughluq went to Sonārgāon, took Fakhr-ud-dīn to Delhi and killed him; and Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf notes that Fakhr-ud-dīn was killed by Hājī Iliyās.

Muhammad Shāh. A large number of his coins have been discovered, but not a single coin bearing the name of Rājā Ganesh has hitherto come to light. It has, therefore, been suggested by some that probably Ganesh never assumed full sovereignty but ruled as a virtual dictator in the name of some descendants of Iliyās Shāh, who were mere puppets in his hands. These nominal rulers were Shihāb-ud-dīn Bāyazīd Shāh, who succeeded to the throne some time between A.D. 1411 and A.D. 1413, and 'Alā-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh, son and successor of Bāyazīd Shāh, some of whose coins have come down to us. Dr. Bhattasali has identified Rājā Ganesh with Danujamardana Deva, some of whose coins, struck in the widely distant mints of Pāndua, Suvarnagrāma and Chittāgong, and bearing Sanskrit legends in Bengali characters, have been discovered. Some again are of opinion that the two were different persons.

The rule of the dynasty of Ganesh did not last long. Jalāl-ud-dīn Muhammad died in A.D. 1431 and was succeeded by his son Shams-ud-dīn Ahmad, who reigned until A.D. 1442. The tyranny of this monarch made him extremely unpopular, and he fell a prey to a conspiracy organised against him by two officers of his government, Shādī Khān and Nāsir Khān. Nāsir Khān and Shādī Khān soon became jealous of each other, as both of them aspired to the throne of Bengal, and the former put his rival to death. But he was destined to exercise sovereignty only for a few days, as the nobles, who had been attached to Shams-ud-dīn Ahmad, soon opposed his authority and slew him. They then placed Nāsir-ud-dīn, a grandson of Hāji Iliyās, on the throne, who assumed the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn 'Abul Muzaffar Mahmūd Shāh, as appears on his coins. Thus was restored the rule of the Iliyās Shāhī dynasty.

As is proved by some coins, Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd reigned peacefully for about seventeen years. He is credited with the construction of some buildings at Gaur and a mosque at Sātgāon. On his death in A.D. 1460, his son, Rukn-ud-dīn Bārbak Shāh, ascended the throne of Bengal. He was the first ruler in Hindustān to maintain a large number of Abyssinian slaves, some of whom were raised to high positions. According to Ghulām Husain Salīm, Bārbak "was a sagacious and law-abiding sovereign". He died in A.D. 1474, and was succeeded by his son, Shams-ud-dīn Yūsuf Shāh, who is described in his inscriptions as Shams-ud-dīn Abul Muzaffar Yūsuf Shāh. He was a virtuous, learned and pious ruler and reigned till 1481. It has been asserted by some that the Muslims conquered Sylhet during his reign. After his death, the nobles raised his son, Sikandar II, to the throne. But the new ruler, being

found to be of defective intellect, was deposed almost immediately in favour of Jalāl-ud-dīn Fath Shāh, a son of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd. Fath Shāh was prudent enough to realise the danger that lay in the growing influence of the Abyssinians, but his attempt to check it cost him his life. The discontented Abyssinians formed a conspiracy against him under the leadership of a eunuch, who had him murdered in A.D. 1486 and usurped the throne of Bengal under the title of Bārbak Shāh, Sultān Shāhzāda. But Bārbak was murdered in the course of a few months by Indīl Khān, who, though an Abyssinian, was loyal to Fath Shāh and was a military commander of proved ability. Pressed by the widow of Fath Shāh, and the courtiers of Gaur, Indīl Khān, after displaying some decent reluctance, ascended the throne of Bengal under the title of Saif-ud-dīn Fīrūz. If the author of the *Riyāz* is to be relied on, the confidence reposed in him as an able administrator and commander was justified by his measures, but he was indiscriminately charitable. He died in A.D. 1489, when the nobles placed on the throne a surviving son of Fath Shāh, under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh II. But this ruler was done away with in A.D. 1490 by an ambitious Abyssinian, known as Sīdī Badr, who seized the throne under the title of Shams-ud-dīn Abu Nasar Muzaffar Shāh. This Abyssinian's reign of three years and a few months was marked by tyranny and disorder, which caused widespread discontent among the soldiers and the officers, including his wise minister, 'Alā-ud-dīn Husain, who was an Arab by descent. They besieged him in Gaur for four months, in the course of which he died. The nobles of Bengal then raised 'Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh to the throne (1493), in recognition of his merit and ability.

The accession of 'Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh marks the commencement of the rule of a new dynasty, which endured about half a century and the members of which have various useful measures to their credit. We have numerous inscriptions of Husain Shāh, and his coins, as well as those of his son Nusrat Shāh, are varied and abundant. An enlightened and wise man, Husain Shāh was one of the most popular rulers that ascended the throne of Bengal. With a view to restoring order in the internal administration of his kingdom, he suppressed the power of the palace guards, who had, during the preceding reigns, established a position similar to that of the Praetorian Guards in Rome. He also expelled the Abyssinians from his kingdom, as their increased influence had become a serious menace to the throne. In A.D. 1494 he hospitably received Husain Shāh Sharqī of Jaunpur, who, being driven from his kingdom by Sikandar Lodī of Delhi, had fled towards Bengal. The fugitive

monarch was allowed to live at Colgong (in Bihār near Bhāgalpur)[1] till he died there in A.D. 1500. Having established order near his capital, Husain Shāh tried to recover the lost territorial possessions of Bengal. He extended the limits of his kingdom as far as the borders of Orissa to the south, recovered Magadha from the control of the Sharqīs of Jaunpur, invaded the Āhom kingdom of Assam, and captured Kāmatāpur in Koch Bihār in 1498. Assam was soon recovered by its old king. Husain Shāh then applied himself to ensuring the security of the frontiers of his kingdom, and built mosques and alms-houses in different parts of it, making suitable endowments for their maintenance. He died in 1518 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Nasīb Khān, who assumed the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Nusrat Shāh. Unlike many other Muslim rulers in India, Nusrat Shāh proved generous towards his brothers and doubled their inheritance. He invaded Tirhut, slew its king and placed there 'Alā-ud-dīn and Makhdūm-i-'Ālam, his own brothers-in-law, to look after its administration. He was a patron of art, architecture and literature. He caused two famous mosques, the *Barā Sonā Masjid* (Large Golden Mosque) and *Qadam Rasūl* (Foot of the Prophet), to be constructed at Gaur; and a Bengali version of the *Mahābhārata* was made under his orders. He was eventually assassinated by his palace eunuchs in 1533 and was succeeded by his son, 'Alā-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh, who, after a reign of not more than three months, was killed by his uncle, Ghiyās-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh was the last king of the Husain Shāhī dynasty, whom Sher Khān Sūr expelled from Bengal.

3. Independent Sultānates in the Provinces of Northern and Western India

A. Jaunpur

The city of Jaunpur was founded by Fīrūz of the house of Tughluq to perpetuate the memory of his cousin and patron, Muhammad Jauna. We have noticed before how, during the period of confusion following the invasion of Tīmūr, Khwāja Jahān threw off his allegiance to the Delhi Sultānate and founded a dynasty of independent rulers at Jaunpur, known as the Sharqī dynasty after his title, "*Malik-ush-Sharq*". He died in 1399, leaving his throne to his adopted son, Malik Qaranful, who assumed the title of Mubārak Shāh Sharqī. Mubārak Shāh died, after a short reign, in 1402, and was succeeded by his younger brother, Ibrāhīm Shāh Sharqī. Ibrāhīm

[1] There are several Muslim tombs at Colgong, one of which is regarded as the tomb of Husain Shāh Sharqī.

ruled for about thirty-four years and was the ablest ruler of the Sharqī dynasty. Being himself a man of culture, he patronised art and literature, as a result of which Jaunpur became an important centre of Muslim learning. This city was also adorned by the construction of beautiful buildings, marked by Hindu influence, and having mosques without minarets of the usual type. The famous *Atāla Masjid* which stands now as a brilliant specimen of the Jaunpur style of architecture, was completed in A.D. 1408. Ibrāhīm died in 1436 and was succeeded by his son, Mahmūd Shāh. The new king annexed the greater part of the district of Chunār, but his expedition against Kālpī proved unsuccessful. On making an attempt to occupy Delhi, he was defeated by Buhlūl Lodī, who compelled him to return to Jaunpur. Mahmūd died in A.D. 1457, when his son, Bhīkhan, ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad Shāh. But the unscrupulous conduct of this king highly incensed the nobles and his own relatives, who had him murdered and raised his brother, Husain Shāh, to the throne. Soon after his accession, Husain Shāh concluded in 1458 a four years' truce with Buhlūl Lodī of Delhi. He utilised this period in suppressing the independent zamindārs of Tirhut, and in conducting a plundering expedition into Orissa, the Rājā of which purchased peace by paying a vast treasure. He also led an army in 1466 to capture the fortress of Gwālior, but could not reduce it and retired when its Rājā, Mān Singh, paid him a heavy indemnity. After these initial successes, fortune turned against Husain Shāh in his renewed war with Buhlūl Lodī, who expelled him to Bihār and annexed the kingdom of Jaunpur to Delhi. Buhlūl appointed his son, Bārbak, governor of Jaunpur, permitting him to use the royal title and coin money. Thus the independence of Jaunpur came to an end. The period of Sharqī rule at Jaunpur, extending for about eighty-five years, was marked by prosperity, development of architecture, and an outburst of a high type of culture, which earned for the city, during Ibrāhīm's reign, the title of "the Shīrāz of India".

B. Mālwa

Annexed by 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī in A.D. 1305, Mālwa continued to be governed by Muslim chiefs, under the authority of Delhi, till it became independent, like other provinces, during the period of disorder after the invasion of Tīmūr. Dilāwar Khān Ghūrī, who had been appointed governor of Mālwa probably by Fīrūz of the house of Tughluq, made himself independent of the Delhi Sultānate for all practical purposes in 1401, though he did not formally renounce

his allegiance to it or assume the "style of royalty". In 1406 he was succeeded by his ambitious son, Alp Khān, who ascended the throne under the title of Hūshang Shāh. The new ruler was a man of restless spirit, and took a delight in adventurous enterprises and wars, in which he remained constantly engaged throughout his reign. In 1422 he left his capital for Orissa in the guise of a merchant and made a surprise attack on the unsuspecting Rājā of that kingdom, who had to bribe him to withdraw by giving him seventy-five elephants. On his way back to Mālwa, Hūshang captured Kherla and carried off its Rājā as a prisoner. He had to fight against the Sultāns of Delhi, Jaunpur, and Gujarāt, and had once to measure his strength with Ahmad Shāh Bahmanī, who had been offended by his capture of Kherla, the Rājā of which place had been formerly a vassal of the Bahmanī kingdom. But most of his campaigns resulted in defeats and disasters for him. He died on the 6th July, 1435, when his eldest son, Ghaznī Khān, was proclaimed king of Mālwa, under the title of Muhammad Shāh. But the new ruler was absolutely unmindful of the affairs of the State. His minister, Mahmūd Khān, usurped the throne in May, 1436. Thus was founded the dynasty of the Khaljī Sultāns of Mālwa. Mahmūd frustrated the opposition of a faction of the nobles, and of Ahmad Shāh I of Gujarāt, who had espoused the cause of Mas'ūd Khān, a son of Muhammad Shāh of Mālwa.

Mahmūd Khaljī was a brave warrior, who fought against Ahmad Shāh I of Gujarāt, Muhammad Shāh of Delhi, Muhammad Shāh III Bhamanī and Rānā Kumbha of Mewār. He failed in his contests with the Muslim Sultāns. His war with the Rānā of Mewār seems to have been indecisive. Strangely enough, both sides claimed victory, and while the Rānā of Mewār built the "Tower of Victory" at Chitor, the Sultān of Mālwa erected a seven-storeyed column at Māndū to commemorate his triumph. Mahmūd Khaljī was undoubtedly the ablest of the Muslim rulers of Mālwa. He extended the limits of this kingdom up to the Sātpurā Range in the south, the frontier of Gujarāt in the west, Bundelkhand in the east, and Mewār and Harautī in the north. His fame spread outside India. The Khalifah of Egypt recognised his position and he received a mission from Sultān Abu-Sa'īd. He was a just and active administrator. Ferishta thus praises his qualities: "Sultān Mahmūd was polite, brave, just and learned, and during his reign, his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, were happy and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other. Scarcely a year passed that he did not take the field, so that his tent became his home, and his resting-place the field of battle. His leisure hours were devoted

to hearing the histories and memoirs of the courts of different kings of the earth read." He died at Māndū, at the age of sixty-eight, on the 1st June, 1469, after a reign of about thirty-four years.

Mahmūd's eldest son, Ghiyās-ud-dīn, ascended the throne of Mālwa two days after his father's death. He was a lover of peace and a devout Muslim, "particular in his daily prayers", and abstained from all intoxicants and prohibited articles of food. But his last days were rendered unhappy by quarrels between his two sons, 'Abdul Qādir Nāsir-ud-dīn and Shujā'at Khān 'Alā-ud-dīn. The former at last seized the throne in A.D. 1500. Nāsir-ud-dīn greatly abused his power till he died in A.D. 1510. His second son then ascended the throne under the title of Mahmūd II. To get rid of the influence of the Muslim nobles, Mahmūd II appointed Medinī Rāi, the powerful Rājput chief of Chanderī, to the office of minister. Medinī Rāi soon acquired supreme influence in the State and appointed Hindus to offices of trust and responsibility. This excited the jealousy of the nobles of Mālwa, who removed the Rājput minister with the help of Sultan Muzaffar Shāh II of Gujarāt. But Medinī Rāi was able to inflict a defeat on Māhmūd II himself with the help of Rānā Sanga of Chitor. The Sultān of Mālwa was captured by the victorious Rājputs. Rānā Sanga, however, treated him with chivalrous generosity, characteristic of the Rājput race, and restored his vanquished foe to his kingdom. But the authority of the kingdom of Mālwa had been by this time greatly reduced, and the days of its independence were numbered. The Sultān, Mahmūd II, incurred the hostility of Rānā Ratan Singh, successor of Rānā Sanga, by raiding his territories; and the Rānā, as an act of reprisal, invaded Mālwa. He also excited the wrath of Sultān Bahādur Shāh of Gujarāt by giving shelter to Chānd Khān, the latter's younger brother and a rival for his throne. Bahādur Shāh thereupon captured Māndū on the 17th March, 1531, and the independence of Mālwa was thus extinguished. It continued to remain under Bahādur Shāh of Gujarāt, till it was later on occupied for a short period by the Mughul ruler, Humāyūn. About 1535 Mallū Khān, formerly an officer of the Khaljī Sultāns of Mālwa, established independent sovereignty in Mālwa under the title of Qādir Shāh, but he was deposed by Sher Shāh, the Afghan ruler of Delhi, in 1542. After being governed by viceroys of the Afghān government, Mālwa was conquered by Mughul generals from Bāz Bahādur in A.D. 1561–1562.

C. Gujarāt

The immense wealth of the province of Gujarāt, due particularly to active commerce through the rich ports of Cambay, Surāt and Broach, often drew upon her external invasions. Annexed to the Delhi Sultānate by 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī in A.D. 1297, it was ruled for a long time by Muslim governors appointed by the Delhi Sultāns. But in 1401 Zafar Khān (son of a Rājput convert), who had been appointed governor of the province in 1391 by Muhammad Shāh, the youngest son of Fīrūz of the house of Tughluq, formally assumed independence. In 1403 Zafar Khān's son, Tātār Khān, acting in conspiracy with some discontented nobles, rose against his father, imprisoned him at Asāwal and proclaimed himself king under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad Shāh. He even marched towards Delhi with a view to establishing his authority there, but was put to death by his uncle and regent, Shams Khān. This enabled Zafar Khān to recover his throne and to assume the title of Sultān Muzaffar Shāh. Muzaffar Shāh waged a successful war against Hūshang Shāh, Sultān of Mālwa, and captured Dhār. After his death in June, 1411, Ahmad Shāh, his grandson and heir-designate, ascended the throne. Ahmad has been justly regarded as the real founder of the independence of Gujarāt. Endowed with considerable courage and energy, he engaged himself throughout his reign of about thirty years in extending the limits of his kingdom, which had been confined, during the reigns of his two predecessors, to a small territory near Asāwal. Success always attended his campaigns against the Sultān of Mālwa, and the chiefs of Asīrgarh, Rājputāna and other neighbouring territories. He also devoted his attention to improving the civil administration of his kingdom and dispensed justice impartially. In the first year of his reign, he built the beautiful city of Ahmadābād, on the site of the old town of Asāwal, and removed his capital to that place, which to this day bears witness to his taste and munificence. His only defect was his religious intolerance. He died on the 16th August, 1442, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Muhammad Shāh, who reigned till his death on the 10th February, A.D. 1451. Two weak rulers, Muhammad Shāh's son, Qutb-ud-dīn Ahmad, and Muhammad's brother Dāūd, followed him. Through his evil ways, Dāūd alienated the sympathy of the nobles within a few days of his accession. They deposed him, and raised his nephew, Abul Fath Khān, a grandson of Ahmad Shāh, to the throne, under the title of Mahmūd, commonly known as Begarha.

Mahmūd Begarha was by far the most eminent Sultān of his dynasty. The leading Muslim historian of his country observes that "he added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarāt, and was the best of all the Gujarāt kings, including all who preceded, and all who succeeded him; and whether for abounding justice and generosity . . . for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Mussalmāns; for soundness in judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood, and in old age; for power, for valour, and victory, he was a pattern of excellence". Ascending the throne at a comparatively young age, he at once took the management of the affairs of his kingdom into his own hands, and overpowered his hostile courtiers, who had formed a conspiracy to raise his brother, Hasan Khān, to the throne. He ruled vigorously, without the influence of any minister or of the harem, for about fifty-three years; and being a brave warrior, he gained success in all his campaigns. He saved Nizām Shāh Bahmanī from aggression on the part of Mahmūd Khaljī of Mālwa, defeated the Sūmra and Sodha chiefs of Cutch, suppressed the pirates of Jagat (Dvārakā), and reduced the strong forts of Junāgarh and Chāmpāner, the latter being named by him Muhammadābād. As a result of his conquests, the kingdom of Gujarāt reached its extreme limits, extending "from the frontiers of Māndū to the frontiers of Sind, by Junāgarh; to the Siwālik Parbat by Jālor and Nāgaur; to Nāsik Trimbak by Baglāna; from Burhānpur to Berar and Malkāpur of the Deccan; to Karkūn and the river Narbada on the side of Burhānpur; on the side of Īdar as far as Chitor and Kūmbhalgarh, and on the side of the sea as far as the bounds of Chaul". Towards the close of his reign, he tried, in alliance with Qansauh-al-Ghaurī, Sultān of Egypt, to check the rising power of the Portuguese in the Indian Seas, who had within a decade, since the discovery of the Cape Route by Vasco da Gama in 1498, almost monopolised the lucrative spice trade from the Red Sea and Egypt at the expense of the interests of Muslim traders and the important sea-ports of Western India, like Cambay and Chaul. The Egyptian fleet, under the command of Amīr Husain the Kurd, governor of Jedda, and the Indian contingent, under the command of Malik Ayāz, a Turk who had found employment in the court of Gujarāt, defeated a Portuguese squadron commanded by Dom Lourenço, son of the Portuguese viceroy, Francesco de Almeida, near Chaul, south of Bombay, in 1508. But the Portuguese inflicted a crushing defeat on the allied Muslim fleet, near Diu, in 1509, and recovered their naval ascendancy on the sea-coast. Mahmūd granted them a site for a factory at Diu.

After the death of Mahmūd Begarha on the 23rd November,

1511, the throne passed to his son Muzaffar II, who waged successful wars against the Rājputs and restored Mahmūd Khaljī of Mālwa to his throne. Muzaffar's death on the 7th April, 1526, was followed by two short and insignificant reigns of his sons, Sikandar and Nāsir Khān Mahmūd II, till in the month of July of the same year his more daring son, Bahādur, got possession of the throne.

Brave and warlike like his grandfather, Bahādur was a famous ruler in the history of medieval India. He not only defeated Mahmūd II of Mālwa and annexed his kingdom in 1531 but also overran the territories of the Rānā of Mewār, the old enemy of his house, and stormed Chitor in A.D. 1534. Fortune, however, went against him in his wars with Humāyūn, in the course of which he was deprived not only of the newly-conquered province of Mālwa but also of the greater part of his own kingdom. But on the withdrawal of the Delhi troops, Bahādur regained his kingdom and turned his attention towards expelling the Portuguese, whose assistance he had sought in vain against the Mughuls. Failing to persuade the Portuguese governor, Nunho da Cunha, to come to him, he himself proceeded to visit him on board his ship in February, 1537, but was treacherously drowned by the Portuguese, and all his companions were murdered. After the death of Bahādur, anarchy and confusion reigned supreme in Gujarāt under his weak successors, who were mere puppets in the hands of rival baronial parties; so it was easily annexed to the Mughul Empire by Akbar in A.D. 1572.

D. *Kāshmīr*

In the year A.D. 1315 Shāh Mirzā, a Muslim adventurer from Swāt, entered the service of the Hindu Prince of Kāshmīr, who died shortly afterwards. Shāh Mirzā seized the throne of Kāshmīr in A.D. 1339 or 1346 under the title of Shams-ud-dīn Shāh and caused coins to be struck and the *Khutba* to be read in his name. He used his newly-acquired power wisely, and died in A.D. 1349.[1] His sons, Jamshīd, 'Alā-ud-dīn, Shihāb-ud-dīn, and Qutb-ud-dīn, then reigned successively for about forty-six years. After Qutb-ud-dīn's death in A.D. 1394, his son Sikandar ascended the throne of Kāshmīr.

Reigning at the time of Tīmūr's invasion of India, Sikandar exchanged envoys with him, though the two never met each other. He was generous towards the men of his own faith, and many

[1] The chronology of the Muhammadan Sultāns of Kāshmīr is rather bewildering, and the dates of their reigns have to be regarded as being approximate.

learned Muslim scholars flocked to his court from Persia, Arabia and Mesopotamia, but his general attitude was not liberal. He died, after a reign of twenty-two years and nine months, in A.D. 1416. His eldest son, 'Ālī Shāh, then reigned for a few years, after which he was overpowered by his brother, Shāhī Khān, who ascended the throne in June, A.D. 1420, under the title of Zain-ul-'Ābidīn.

Zain-ul-'Ābidīn was a benevolent, liberal and enlightened ruler. He did much to diminish theft and highway robbery in his kingdom by enforcing the principle of the responsibility of the village communities for local crimes, regulated the prices of commodities, lightened the burden of taxation on the people, and rehabilitated the currency, which had been greatly debased during the reigns of his predecessors. His public works immensely benefited his subjects. He was a man of liberal ideas, and showed remarkable toleration towards the followers of other faiths. He recalled the Brāhmaṇas, who had left the kingdom during his father's reign, admitted learned Hindus to his society, abolished the *jizya* and granted perfect religious freedom to all. He possessed a good knowledge of Persian, Hindi, and Tibetan, besides his own language, and patronised literature, painting and music. Under his initiative, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rājataranginī* were translated from Sanskrit into Persian, and several Arabic and Persian books were translated into the Hindi language. Thus, for all these qualities, he has been justly described as "the Akbar of Kāshmīr", though he differed from him in a few traits of personal character. He died in November or December, 1470, and was succeeded by his son Haidar Shāh.

The history of the later Sultāns of Kāshmīr is uninteresting and unimportant. After Zain-ul-'Ābidīn's death, anarchy "ensued under the rule of nominal kings who were placed on the throne as a mark for the machinations of the different parties who were seeking pre-eminence for purposes of self-aggrandisement and plunder". Towards the end of A.D. 1540, Mirzā Haidar, a relative of Humāyūn, conquered Kāshmīr. He governed it, theoretically, on behalf of Humāyūn, but in practice as an independent ruler, till 1551, when he was overthrown by the Kāshmīr nobles, who resumed their intrigues and quarrels. About A.D. 1555 the Chakks seized the throne of Kāshmīr, but with no relief to the troubled kingdom, which was absorbed into the Mughul Empire in the time of Akbar.

4. Independent Sultānates in Southern India, including Khāndesh

A. Khāndesh

Khāndesh was a province of Muhammad bin Tughluq's empire in the valley of the Tāptī river. Fīrūz Shāh entrusted its government to one of his personal attendants, Malik Rājā Fārūqī, whose ancestors had been respected nobles of the Delhi court in the reigns of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Muhammad bin Tughluq. In the period of confusion following the death of Fīrūz Shāh, Malik Rājā, following the example of his neighbour, Dilāwar Khān of Mālwa, declared his independence of the Delhi Sultānate. He was defeated by Muzaffar Shāh I of Gujarāt in several battles. Being a man of peaceful disposition, he treated his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, with kindness and consideration. He died on the 29th April, 1399, and his son, Malik Nasīr, soon made himself absolute master of Khāndesh by overpowering his brother Hasan. The new Sultān captured the fortress of Asīrgarh from its Hindu chieftain, but Ahmad Shāh, the Sultān of Gujarāt, defeated him when he attacked Nandurbār and compelled him to swear fealty to him. His war against his son-in-law, 'Alā-ud-dīn Ahmad of the Bahmanī dynasty, also ended in disaster for him and he died in the year 1437–1438. Then after the two uneventful reigns of his son, 'Ādil Khān I (1438–41), and grandson, Mubārak Khān I (1441–1457), the throne of Khāndesh was occupied by Mubārak Khān's son, 'Ādil Khān II, who was an able and vigorous ruler and tried hard to restore administrative order in his kingdom, the authority of which was extended by him over Gondwāna. On his death without any issue in 1501, the throne passed to his brother Dāūd, who, after an inglorious reign of about seven years, died in 1508, and was succeeded by his son, Ghaznī Khān. Ghaznī Khān was poisoned within ten days of his accession, and Khāndesh was plunged into disorder due to the faction fights of two rival claimants to its throne, one being supported by Ahmad Nizām Shāh of Ahmadnagar, and the other by Mahmūd Begarha of Gujarāt, till the latter succeeded in raising his candidate to the throne with the title of 'Ādil Khān III. The reign of 'Ādil Khān III was not marked by any event of importance. He died on the 25th August, 1520, and his weak successors had not the courage or ability to save the kingdom from the aggressions of its external enemies. Like Gujarāt, Khāndesh was annexed by Akbar to his empire in 1601.

B. The Bahmanī Kingdom

Of all the independent Muslim kingdoms that arose on the ruins of the Delhi Sultānate, the Bahmanī kingdom of the Deccan proved to be the most powerful. It came into existence during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq as a challenge to his authority. The nobles of the Deccan, driven to rebellion by the eccentric policy of the Delhi Sultān, seized the fort of Daulatābād and proclaimed one of themselves, Ismā'īl Mukh the Afghān, as king of the Deccan under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Shāh. Ismā'īl Mukh, being an old and ease-loving man, proved unfit for the office. Soon he voluntarily made room for a more worthy leader, Hasan, entitled Zafar Khān, who was declared king by the nobles on the 3rd August, 1347, under the title of Abul-Muzaffar 'Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh. The story related by Ferishta about Hasan's origin, to the effect that he was originally a menial in the service of a Brāhmaṇa astrologer of Delhi, Gangū, who enjoyed the favour of Muhammad bin Tughluq, and later on rose to prominence owing to the patronage of his Hindu master, finds no corroboration in the accounts of the later Muslim chroniclers and is also not supported by the evidence of coins and inscriptions. Hasan, in fact, claimed descent from the famous Persian hero Bahman, son of Isfandiyār, and the dynasty that he founded thus came to be known as the Bahmanī dynasty.

Soon after his accession, 'Alā-ud-dīn Hasan selected Gulbarga as his capital and renamed it as Ahsanābād. But the Hindu rulers of the south, who had not failed to profit by the political disorders in the Deccan at the time of 'Alā-ud-dīn Hasan's rise, were not disposed to submit to his authority. He therefore launched on a career of conquest, which was marked by success. When he died on the 11th February, 1358, he left a dominion extending from the Waingangā river in the north to the Kṛishṇā river in the south and from Daulatābād in the west to Bhongīr, now in the Nizām's dominions, in the east. For the administration of his kingdom, he divided it into four *tarafs* or provinces, Gulbarga, Daulatābād, Berar and Bīdar. Each province was placed in charge of a governor, who maintained an army, and made appointments in all civil and military posts under him. The efficiency of administration in the provinces checked the outbreak of rebellions. The author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir* has thus praised this Sultān: "Sultān 'Alā-ud-dīn I Hasan Shāh was a just king and the cherisher of his people and pious. During his reign his subjects and the army used to pass their time in perfect ease and content; and he did much towards propagating the true faith."

The next Sultān was Muhammad Shāh I, the eldest son of Hasan, who had nominated him as his heir on his death-bed. Soon after his accession, Muhammad Shāh organised the different branches of his government, like the ministry, the household troops and the provincial administration. But throughout his reign, he was chiefly engaged in waging wars against the rulers of Warangal and Vijayanagar. Those rulers offered a stubborn resistance, but both were overpowered by the troops of Gulbarga, and had to conclude peace, after immense losses, on humiliating terms.

Muhammad Shāh's mode of life was not unimpeachable. The author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir* distinctly states that the Sultān "showed signs of an irreligious manner of living, which threw him on the bed of helplessness".

After the death of Muhammad Shāh I in A.D. 1377, his son, Mujāhid Shāh, ascended the throne and marched in person against Vijayanagar. But he could not capture that city and soon had to return to his capital after making peace with its Rāya. He fell a victim to a conspiracy organised by one of his near relatives named Dāūd Khān,[1] who usurped the throne. The usurper was paid back in his own coin by being murdered in May, 1378, by an assassin at the instigation of Mujāhid's foster-sister, Rūh Parwar Āghā. The nobles and military officers then raised to the throne Muhammad Shāh, son of Mahmūd Khān, the fourth son of 'Alā-ud-dīn Hasan Bahmanī.

Unlike his predecessors, Muhammad Shāh II was a lover of peace and devoted to learning; and his reign was not disturbed by foreign wars. He built mosques, established free schools for orphans, and invited learned men from all parts of Asia to his court. But his last days were embittered by the intrigues of his sons, who were eager to get the throne. After his death in April, A.D. 1397, followed the inglorious and troubled reigns of his two sons, Ghiyās-ud-dīn and Shams-ud-dīn Dāūd, lasting for only a few months, till the throne of Gulbarga was seized in November, 1397, by Fīrūz, a grandson of 'Alā-ud-dīn Hasan Bahmanī, who assumed the title of Tāj-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh.

We are told by the author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir* that Fīrūz Shāh "was an impetuous and a mighty monarch, and expended all his ability and energy in eradicating and destroying tyranny and heresy, and he took much pleasure in the society of the *Shekhs*, learned men and hermits". But after a few years' rule, he became

[1] Dāūd was uncle of Mujāhid according to Ferishta but his cousin according to the author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir*.

addicted to the common vices of his time, which even Ferishta has noted. He was conversant with various languages and could talk freely with his wives of diverse nationalities in their own tongues. He followed the traditional policy of his dynasty in waging wars against the Rāyas of Vijayanagar and some other Hindu rulers of the Deccan. He gained success in his two expeditions against Vijayanagar in 1398 and 1406, exacted heavy indemnity from its Rāya and even compelled him to surrender a princess of Vijayanagar for his harem. But his third attack in 1420 resulted in his defeat at Pāngul, to the north of the Kṛishṇā, and his retreat from the field after his commander-in-chief, Mīr Fazl-ullāh Injū, had been killed. The Vijayanagar troops soon occupied the southern and eastern districts of the Bahmanī kingdom. This defeat told heavily on the Sultān's mind and body, and he left the administration in the hands of his slaves, Hūshyār 'Ain-ul-mulk and Nizām Bīdār-ul-mulk. He was ultimately forced to abdicate the throne in favour of his brother Ahmad, who, according to the author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir*, did away with Fīrūz Shāh in September, 1422, though some writers believe, on the authority of Ferishta, that Fīrūz Shāh died a natural death.

To avenge the losses sustained by the Bahmanī troops in his brother's reign, Ahmad Shāh carried on a terrible war against Vijayanagar. The siege of Vijayanagar by the Bahmanī troops reduced it to great distress and compelled its Rāya to conclude peace by paying a heavy indemnity. This was conveyed to Ahmad's camp, on elephants, by the Rāya's son, who was received there honourably; and the invaders then returned to their country. In 1424 or 1425 Ahmad Shāh's general, Khān-i-'Azam, attacked the Hindu kingdom of Warangal and succeeded in capturing its fortress, with immense treasures, and in killing its ruler. The independence of Warangal was thus extinguished. Ahmad Shāh also waged war against Mālwa. The Sultān of Mālwa, Hūshang Shāh, was defeated with great losses in men and money. Ahmad's war with the Sultān of Gujarāt, Ahmad Shāh I, ended in failure, and peace was at last concluded through the intervention of theologians and learned men of both sides. The Hindu chiefs of the Konkan also felt the weight of Bahmanī arms during his reign, but this pressure was removed after his death from illness in February, 1435.

Ahmad Shāh transferred the capital of his kingdom from Gulbarga to Bīdar, which was beautifully situated and had a salubrious climate. Though not endowed with much learning, he bestowed favours on some Muslim scholars. The poet, Shaikh Āzarī of Isfarāyin in Khurāsān, who came to his court, received a huge amount of

money for composing two verses in praise of his palace at Bīdar; and Maulānā Sharf-ud-dīn Māzandarānī was also rewarded with 12,000 *tankās* for inscribing in beautiful handwriting two verses on the door of that palace.

In the meanwhile, baronial intrigues for position and influence, often resulting in pitched battles and massacres, had begun to affect the homogeneity of the Bahmanī kingdom. There were perpetual feuds between the Deccani nobles with their allies, the Africans and the *Muwallads* (issue of African fathers and Indian mothers) on the one side, and, on the other, the foreign nobles, composed of the Turks, the Arabs, the Persians and the Mughuls. Many of the latter had been elevated to high offices in the State, for their hardy and active habits, in preference to the children of the soil, who grew jealous of them. This jealousy was accentuated by religious differences, for while most of the Deccanis were Sunnīs, the majority of the rival party consisted of Shiahs. Thus the history of the later Bahmanīds is a dreary tale of conspiracies and strife, which sucked the life-blood of the kingdom till it finally disintegrated.

Ahmad was succeeded peacefully by his eldest son under the title of 'Alā-ud-dīn II. Soon after his accession, 'Alā-ud-dīn II suppressed a rebellion headed by his brother Muhammad, who was, however, pardoned and given the government of the Rāichūr Doāb, where he remained faithful during the rest of his life. The Hindu chiefs of the Konkan were next reduced to submission, and the Rājā of Sangameshwar gave his beautiful daughter in marriage to the Bahmanī Sultān. This was not liked by the Sultān's Muslim wife Malikā-i-Jahān. At her request her father, Nasīr Khān, the ruler of Khāndesh, invaded Berar, but was defeated by Malik-ul-Tujjār Khalaf Hasan, governor of Daulatābād and leader of the foreign nobles. In 1443 'Alā-ud-dīn waged war against Vijayanagar, the Rāya of which had to conclude peace by promising regular payment of tribute in future. Ferishta writes that at this time the Rāya of Vijayanagar employed Muslim soldiers in his army, admitted some Muslims into his service, and even erected a mosque at the capital city for their worship. Like other Sultāns of the dynasty, 'Alā-ud-dīn was a zealous champion of Islam and was benevolent towards the followers of his own faith. We know from Ferishta and the author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir* that he "founded *masjids*, public schools and charitable institutions, among which was a hospital of perfect elegance and purity of style, which he built in his capital, Bīdar, and made two beautiful villages there as a pious endowment, in order that the revenue

of these villages should be solely devoted to supplying medicines and drinks . . . so much did he attend to carrying out the orders and prohibitions of the divine *law* that even the name of wine and all intoxicating liquors was abrogated in his jurisdiction. . . ."

'Alā-ud-dīn died peacefully in April, 1457, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Humāyūn, who was so cruel as to get the epithet of "*Zālim*" or "the Tyrant". Examples of his cruelties have been cited by the author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir*. Humāyūn died a natural death, according to some writers, in October, 1461, but the more reliable authorities write that he was murdered by some of his servants when he was in a state of intoxication. His death freed his people "from the *talons* of his tortures" and the general sense of relief was thus expressed by the contemporary poet Nazir:

> "Humāyūn Shāh has passed away from the world,
> God Almighty, what a blessing was the death of Humāyūn!
> On the date of his death the world was full of delight,
> So, 'delight of the world' gave the date of his death."

According to the chroniclers Humāyūn's minor son, Nizām Shāh, was next raised to the throne. The queen-mother, Makhdūmah Jahān, tried to manage the administration of the State with the assistance of Khwāja Jahān and Khwāja Mahmūd Gāwān. But the rulers of Orissa and Telingāna were emboldened, during the rule of the boy king, to attack his kingdom. They were driven back with heavy losses. But soon a more formidable danger appeared for the Bahmanīs when Mahmūd Khaljī I of Mālwa led an invasion into their territories and besieged Bīdar, which was saved only when Mahmūd Begarha, the Sultān of Gujarāt, sent a favourable response to the Bahmanī Sultān's appeal for help. Nizām Shāh died very suddenly, on the 30th July, 1463, and his brother, aged only nine, ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad III.

Soon after Muhammad's accession, the old minister Khwāja Jahān, who aimed at a monopoly of power in the State, was put to death through the influence of the queen-mother, and the vacant office was entrusted to Mahmūd Gāwān, who received the title of Khwāja Jahān. Though possessed of wide powers, Mahmūd Gāwān never abused his authority. By virtue of his conspicuous ability, he served the Bahmanī State with unstinted loyalty; and, by skilful diplomacy and successful military operations, he brought the dominions of the Bahmanīs "to an extent never achieved by former sovereigns".

In 1469 Mahmūd Gāwān marched with an army to subdue the

Hindu Rājās of the Konkan, and when he succeeded in capturing several forts, the Rājā of Sangameshwar, overpowered with fear, surrendered the fortress of Khelna to his agents. "This unrivalled minister," writes the author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir*, "seized many forts and towns and captured immense booty, and valuable goods, such as horses, elephants, maidens, and female slaves, as well as precious jewels and pearls, fell into the minister's hands". He also captured Goa, one of the best ports of the Vijayanagar Empire. In the meanwhile, Nizām-ul-mulk Barhi, a commander of the Bahmanī kingdom, had seized the forts of Rajamundry and Kondavīr. In the year 1474 the Deccan was devastated by a terrible famine due to the failure of rain for two successive years, and many succumbed to its rigours. When rain at last fell in the third year, scarcely any farmers remained in the country to cultivate the land.

But the military enterprises of the Sultān continued unabated. In February, 1478, Muhammad invaded and devastated Orissa, the Rājā of which induced him to withdraw by presenting to him some elephants and other valuable gifts.

The most successful military exploit of his reign was directed, in the course of a war with Vijayanagar, against Kāñchī or Conjeeveram (12th March, 1481), a seat of some old temples, which "were the wonder of the age, filled with countless concealed treasures and jewels, and valuable pearls, besides innumerable slave-girls". The besieged soldiers offered a brave resistance but were ultimately vanquished by the Bahmanī troops, who captured an immense booty.

The military record of Muhammad Shah III's reign is indeed one of triumph. But his own voluptuousness, and the selfish intrigues of the nobles of his court, stood in the path of his progress in other respects, and ultimately caused his ruin. Being addicted to hard drinking, the Sultān became mentally unbalanced as years rolled on, and took a suicidal step by passing the death sentence on Mahmūd Gāwān on 5th April, 1481, at the instigation of his enemies, the Deccani nobles, who, being jealous of his power and success, produced a forged letter to persuade the Sultān to believe in the minister's treasonable correspondence with the Rāya of Vijayanagar. Thus Mahmūd Gāwān, who had served the Bahmanī kingdom as minister in three successive reigns with efficiency and honesty, for which he was entitled to the gratitude of his master, fell a prey to a conspiracy organised by a rival baronial clique, blind to the true interests of the State. With the unjust execution of this old minister "departed," remarks

Meadows Taylor rightly, "all the cohesion and power of the Bahmanī kingdom". In many respects, Mahmūd Gāwān's character was far superior to that of his contemporaries. Leading a simple and pure life, he was fond of learning and the society of the learned, which led him to maintain a magnificent college and a vast library at Bīdar; and his disinterested services as a public officer justly entitle him to our praise. Muhammad III discovered his own folly rather too late, and, seized with grief and remorse, he expired within a year on the 22nd March, A.D. 1482.

The Bahmanī kingdom was henceforth thrown into utter confusion, leading to its inevitable collapse. Mahmūd Shāh, the younger son and successor of Muhammad III, had neither the strength of personal character, nor the guidance of an able minister, to enable him to maintain the integrity of his kingdom. The feud between the Deccanis and the foreigners continued with unabated fury and rancour. The provincial governors availed themselves of the prevailing confusion to declare their independence. The nominal authority of Mahmūd came to be confined within a small area round the capital, and he and his four successors remained mere puppets in the hands of Qāsim Barīd-ul-Mamālik, a clever noble of Turkish origin, and after his death in 1504, in those of his son 'Amīr 'Ālī Barīd, "the fox of the Deccan". The last ruler, Kalīmullah Shāh, secretly tried to secure the help of Bābur to restore the lost fortunes of his dynasty, but was sadly disappointed. With his death in 1527 the Bahmanī dynasty came to an end after about one hundred and eighty years' rule.

The history of the Bahmanī dynasty in the Deccan on the whole offers no pleasant reading. Most of its Sultāns employed themselves chiefly in terrible wars, and its internal politics were severely distracted by court intrigues and civil strife. Among the eighteen kings of this dynasty, five were murdered, two died of intemperance, and three were deposed, two of them being blinded. The Bahmanī Sultāns should, however, be credited with patronage of learning and education according to their lights, erection of fortresses and buildings, and construction of irrigation works in the eastern provinces, which benefited the peasantry while securing more revenues to the State.

We get a glimpse of the condition of the common people in the Bahmanī kingdom from certain observations made by the Russian traveller, Althanasius Nikitin, who travelled in this kingdom during the years 1470 to 1474 in the reign of Muhammad Shāh III. He writes: "The Sultān is a little man, twenty years old, in the power of the nobles. . . . The Sultān goes out with 300,000 men

of his own troops. The land is overstocked with people; but those in the country are very miserable, whilst the nobles are extremely opulent and delight in luxury. They are wont to be carried on their silver beds, preceded by some 20 chargers caparisoned in gold, and followed by 300 men on horseback and by 500 on foot, and by hornmen, ten torch-bearers, and ten musicians.

"The Sultān goes out hunting with his mother and his lady, and a train of 10,000 men on horseback, 50,000 on foot; 200 elephants adorned in gilded armour, and in front 100 horsemen, 100 dancers, and 300 common horses in golden clothing; 100 monkeys and 100 concubines, all foreign."

Thus the testimony of a foreign traveller tells us that the lot of the common people was hard as compared with the luxurious standard of living of the nobility. But there is no other positive evidence to enable us to form an accurate picture of the condition of the mass of the people during the whole of the Bahmanī period. The accounts of the Muslim chroniclers are full of details regarding military campaigns and wars against infidels, without any reference to the history of the people.

C. The Five Sultānates of the Deccan

Five separate Sultānates arose in the Deccan, one after another, on the break-up of the Bahmanī kingdom. These were known after the titles of their founders, as the Imād Shāhī dynasty of Berar, the Nizām Shāhī dynasty of Ahmadnagar, the 'Ādil Shāhī dynasty of Bijāpur, the Qutb Shāhī dynasty of Golkundā and the Bārīd Shāhī dynasty of Bīdar. The first to secede was Berar, where Fathullāh Imād Shāh, a Hindu convert, declared his independence in A.D. 1484 and founded the Imād Shāhī dynasty. Berar was absorbed by Ahmadnagar in A.D. 1574.

Yūsuf 'Ādil Khān, Governor of Bijāpur, asserted his independence in A.D. 1489–1490. He was known during his early days as a Georgian slave, who was purchased by Mahmūd Gāwān, and rose to prominence by dint of his merit and ability. Ferishta, however, relying on some private information, writes that he was the son of Sultān Murād II of Turkey, who died in A.D. 1451, that he fled from his country, first to Persia, and then to India at the age of seventeen, to save himself from assassination, ordered by his elder brother, Muhammad II, who had succeeded his father on the throne, and that he sold himself as a slave to the minister of the Bahmanī Sultān. Yūsuf 'Ādil Shāh was not a bigot. Religion was no bar to securing offices in his government, and he had a preference for

the Shiah creed, probably due to his sojourn in Persia. Free from vices in his private life, he was mindful of his duties as a ruler. Ferishta tells us that although Yūsuf 'Ādil Shāh "mingled pleasure with business, yet he never allowed the former to interfere with the latter. He always warned his ministers to act with justice and integrity, and in his own person showed them an example of attention to those virtues. He invited to his court many learned men and valiant officers from Persia, Turkestān, and Rum, and also several eminent artists, who lived happy under the shadow of his bounty. In his reign the citadel of Bijāpur was made of stone". The reigns of Yūsuf 'Ādil Shāh's four immediate successors, Ismā'īl 'Ādil Shāh, son of Yūsuf (1510–1534), Mallū, son of Ismā'īl (1534), Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh I, brother of Mallū (1534–1557), and 'Ālī 'Ādil Shāh, son of Ibrāhīm (1557–1579), were full of intrigues and wars. But the dynasty produced another remarkable ruler in Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh II, nephew and successor of 'Ālī 'Ādil Shāh, who governed the kingdom with universal toleration and wisdom till he died in A.D. 1626. In the opinion of Meadows Taylor, who wrote with some experience of Bijāpur and its local traditions, "he was the greatest of all the 'Ādil Shāhī dynasty, and in most respects, except its founder, the most able and popular". The Bijāpur kingdom survived till its annexation by Aurangzeb in A.D. 1686.

The founder of the Ahmadnagar kingdom was Malik Ahmad, son of Nizām-ul-mulk Bahri, who sprang from the hereditary Hindu revenue officials of Pāthrī, north of the Godāvarī, took a leading part in the conspiracy against Mahmūd Gāwān, and became prime minister after his death. Malik Ahmad was appointed governor of Junnar, but in 1490 he declared himself independent. Some time later he transferred the seat of his government to a place of better strategic position and thus founded the city of Ahmadnagar. After several years' attempts, he captured Daulatābād in A.D. 1499, which helped him to consolidate his dominion. He died in A.D. 1508 and was succeeded by his son, Burhān Nizām Shāh, who, during his reign of forty-five years, waged wars with the neighbouring States and about A.D. 1550 allied himself with the Rāya of Vijayanagar against Bijāpur. His successor, Husain Nizām Shāh, joined the Muslim confederacy against Vijayanagar in 1565. After his death in that year, he was succeeded by his son, Murtazā Nizām Shāh I, a pleasure-loving youth, unfit to compete successfully with his adversaries. There is nothing of importance and interest in the subsequent history of Ahmadnagar except the heroic resistance offered by Chānd Bibi to Akbar's son, Prince Murād, in 1576, and

the military as well as administrative skill of Malik 'Ambar. The kingdom was overrun by the Mughuls in 1600, but it was not finally annexed to their Empire until 1633 in the reign of Shāh Jahān.

The Muslim kingdom of Golkundā grew up on the ruins of the old Hindu kingdom of Warangal, which was conquered by the Bahmanīs in A.D. 1424. The founder of the Qutb Shāhī dynasty was Qulī Shāh, a Turki officer of the Bahmanī kingdom during the reign of Mahmūd Shāh Bahmanī. He was appointed governor of Telingāna by Mahmūd Gāwān and remained loyal to his master till, as a protest against the power and insolence of the Barīds, he declared his independence in A.D. 1512 or 1518. He had a long and prosperous reign till he was murdered at the age of ninety in 1543 by his son Jamshīd, who reigned for seven years. Jamshīd's brother and successor, Ibrāhīm, fought against Vijayanagar in 1565 in alliance with the other Muslim Sultānates. He was a good ruler and freely admitted the Hindus to high offices in the State. After his death in 1611, the history of Golkundā was largely entangled with that of the Mughul Empire till it was annexed to it by Aurangzeb in 1687.

When the distant provinces of the Bahmanī kingdom declared their independence, the remnant of it survived only in name under the ascendancy of the Barīds. In 1526 or 1527 Amīr 'Ālī Barīd formally dispensed with the rule of the puppet Bahmanī Sultāns and founded the Bārīd Shāhī dynasty of Bīdar, which lasted till its territory was absorbed by Bijāpur in A.D. 1618–1619.

The five offshoots of the Bahmanī kingdom had some good rulers, notably in Bijāpur and Golkundā. The history of these Sultānates is largely a record of almost continuous quarrel with one another and with Vijayanagar. Each aspired to the supremacy of the Deccan, which was consequently turned into a scene of internal warfare, similar to what went on between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas in earlier days, or between Mysore, the Marāthas and the Nizām in the eighteenth century. The disruption of the Bahmanī kingdom, and the dissensions among the five Sultānates that rose on its ruins, seriously hampered the progress of Islam, political as well as religious, in the south, where the spirit of Hindu revival, that had manifested itself since the days of the Tughluqs, culminated in the rise and growth of the Vijayanagar Empire.

5. The Hindu Kingdoms—The Vijayanagar Empire

A. Political History

The early history of Vijayanagar is still shrouded in obscurity. Sewell, after referring to several traditional accounts about the origin of the great imperial city, remarks that "perhaps the most reasonable account would be culled from the general drift of the Hindu legends combined with the certainties of historical fact". He accepts the tradition according to which five sons of Sangama, of whom Harihara and Bukka were the most eminent, laid the foundation of the city and kingdom of Vijayanagar, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadrā facing the fortress of Anegundī on the northern bank. They got inspiration for their enterprise from the celebrated Brāhmaṇa sage and scholar of the day, Mādhava Vidyāraṇya, and his brother Sāyana, the famous commentator on the Vedas. This tradition is regarded by some as a later fabrication which found currency in the sixteenth century. In the opinion of Rev. Father Heras, the foundation of the city of Anegundī, which formed the cradle of the Vijayanagar Empire, was laid by the Hoysala king Vīra Ballāla III, and Harihara, a near relative of the Hoysala ruling family, was a frontier officer with his headquarters there. According to another writer, "the fortification of the city that afterwards became Vijayanagar must be regarded as the deliberate act of the great Hoysala ruler, Vīra Ballāla III. It was founded soon after the destruction of Kampilī by the army of Muhammad Tughluq, and immediately following the invasion of the Hoysala capital, Dorasamudra". The theory of Hoysala origin has been recently challenged by a writer who, in discussing the question from different sources, has argued that Harihara and Bukka founded the city and that they "shaped the course of their conduct" on the advice of Mādhava Vidyāraṇya, who is described in an inscription of Harihara II as "the supreme light incarnate". According to some authorities, the five brothers were fugitives from the Telugu country included in the Kākatīya kingdom of Warangal, the capital of which was captured by the Muhammadans in 1424. In the midst of these conflicting opinions, this much can be said with certainty, that Harihara and Bukka and their three brothers made earnest efforts to organise resistance against the advance of the invaders from the north. The significance of the Vijayanagar Empire in the history of India is that for well nigh three centuries it stood for the older religion and culture of the country and saved these from being engulfed by the rush of new ideas and forces. It also indirectly

prevented the extension of the influence of the Bahmanī kingdom and its offshoots in the north, where the power of the Delhi Sultānate had been already considerably weakened, by keeping them constantly engaged in the south. In short, "it was Vijayanagar which held the key to the political situation of the time", characterised by the decline of the Turko-Afghān Sultānate and the rise of important indigenous powers.

The first dynasty of Vijayanagar is named after Sangama. In the time of Harihara I and Bukka I, the Vijayanagar kingdom brought under its influence many principalities and divisions, including, in the opinion of some, most of the Hoysala territory. But it has been pointed out by some writers that Harihara I and Bukka I did not assume full imperial titles. In 1374 Bukka I sent an embassy to China and he died in A.D. 1378–1379. He was succeeded by his son, Harihara II, who undoubtedly assumed the imperial titles of Mahārājādhirāja, Rājaparameśvara, etc. Sewell in his earlier work[1] states on the authority of some Muhammadan historians that Harihara's reign was a period of "unbroken peace". But it is proved by certain inscriptions that there were conflicts between the Vijayanagar Empire and the Muslims during his reign. As a matter of fact, the history of the Vijayanagar Empire, like that of the Bahmanī kingdom, is an unbroken record of bloody wars with different powers. In the cold weather of 1398, Bukka II, son of Harihara II, conducted a raid northwards to the Bahmanī territory, with his father's permission, with a view to seizing the Rāichūr Doāb, situated between the Kṛishṇā and the Tuṅgabhadrā, which formed the bone of contention between the Vijayanagar Empire and the Bahmanī kingdom. He was opposed and defeated by Fīrūz Shāh Bahmanī and a peace was concluded by the middle of 1399, Fīrūz exacting a heavy indemnity. But as several inscriptions show, the reign of Harihara II saw the extension of Vijayanagar authority over the whole of Southern India, including Mysore, Kanara, Chingleput, Trinchinopoly and Conjeeveram (Kāñchī). Harihara II was a worshipper of Śiva under the form of Virupākṣa, but was tolerant of other religions. He died in August 1406, after which the succession to the throne was disputed for some time among his sons. Deva Rāya I, however, secured the throne for himself on the 5th November, 1406. He met with some reverses in his wars with the Bahmanī Sultāns and died in the year A.D. 1422. His son, Vijaya-Bukka or Vīra Vijaya, reigned for only a few months, then Deva Rāya II, son of Vijaya-Bukka, ascended the throne. Though Deva Rāya II's wars with the Bahmanīs ended in defeat and loss, his reign

[1] *A Forgotten Empire*, p. 51.

was marked by reorganisation of the administration. To compete with the Bahmanīs, Mussalmāns were admitted by him into the army; and, to control and regulate trade, he appointed his right-hand man, Lakkanna or Lakshmaṇa, to the "lordship of the southern sea", that is, to the charge of overseas commerce. Nicolo Conti, an Italian traveller, and 'Abdur-Razzāq, an envoy from Persia, visited Vijayanagar in 1420 and 1443 respectively; and they have left glowing descriptions of the city and the Empire of Vijayanagar. In fact, the Empire now extended over the whole of South India, reaching the shores of Ceylon, and attained the zenith of its prosperity during the rule of the first dynasty.

Deva Rāya II died in A.D. 1446 and was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, Mallikārjuna, who repelled a combined attack on his capital by the Bahmanī Sultan and the Rājā of the Hindu kingdom of Orissa and was able to keep his kingdom intact during his rule, which lasted till about A.D. 1465. It was during this reign that the Sāluva chief, Narasimha of Chandragiri, whose ancestors had served the Vijayanagar kingdom faithfully as its feudatories, rose into prominence and resisted the aggressions of the Bahmanī kingdom and the kingdom of Orissa. But Mallikārjuna's successor, Virūpāksha II, proved to be an incompetent ruler. Confusion and disorder naturally followed, taking advantage of which some of the provinces revolted, the Bahmanī Sultān advanced into the Doāb between the Kṛishṇā and the Tungabhadrā, and Rājā Purusottama Gajapati of Orissa advanced as far south as Tiruvannāmalai.

To save the kingdom from these dangers, Narasimha Sāluva deposed his worthless master and seized the throne for himself in about A.D. 1486. Thus the Sangama dynasty was overthrown by what has been called the "First Usurpation" and Vijayanagar passed under the rule of the Sāluva dynasty. Narasimha Sāluva enjoyed the confidence of the people. With the interests of the Empire at heart, he recovered most of the revolted provinces during his six years' rule, though the Rāichūr Doāb remained under the control of the Bahmanīs and Udayagiri under that of the Rājā of Orissa.

Narasimha Sāluva had the prudence to charge his trusted general, Narasa Nāyaka, who claimed descent from a dynasty which ruled over the Tuluva country, with the responsibility for the administration of the kingdom after him, though he desired that his sons should succeed him. Epigraphic evidence disproves the statement of the Muhammadan historians, and of Nuniz, that Narasa Nāyaka murdered the two sons of his master and usurped

the throne for himself. In reality he remained loyal to the dynasty of his master. He placed the latter's younger son, Immadi Narasimha, on the throne, when the elder died of wounds in a battle, though he ably managed the affairs of the State as its *de facto* ruler. It was only when he himself died in A.D. 1505 that his son, Vīra Narasimha, deposed the last Sāluva ruler and seized the throne for himself. This "Second Usurpation" led to the direct rule of the Tuluva dynasty over the Vijayanagar Empire. Vīra Narasimha is described on some copper plates and also by Nuniz as a pious king who distributed gifts at sacred places.

Vīra Narasimha was succeeded by his younger brother, Kṛishṇadeva Rāya, by far the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar, and one of the most famous kings in the history of India. A gallant and active warrior, he was always successful in the wars that he waged almost throughout his reign. He first turned his attention towards suppressing the feudatories in the central portion of his empire before trying to meet his great rivals in the north. Leaving his headquarters towards the end of 1510, he marched against the refractory chief of Ummattūr in Southern Mysore. He was defeated and the fortress of Sivasamudram was captured (1511–1512). Other neighbouring chiefs were also reduced to obedience. In 1512 Kṛishṇadeva Rāya moved towards the Bijāpur frontier and took possession of Rāichūr. Under the advice of his able and experienced minister and general, Sāluva Timma, he did not now invade the Muhammadan territories but turned against Gajapati Pratāparudra of Orissa in 1513, with a view to recovering the territories that his predecessors had captured from Vijayanagar during the reigns of the last rulers of the first dynasty. Early in 1514 he captured the fortress of Udayagiri and made prisoners of an uncle and an aunt of the Rājā of Orissa, who were, however, treated with honour. By the first half of the next year he had captured the strong fortress of Kondavīdu and other fortresses of lesser importance in the neighbourhood, in spite of the fact that the Rājā of Orissa had received assistance from the Sultāns of Golkundā and Bīdar. He also took as captives the Gajapati prince, Vīrabhadra, and some other Orissa nobles. The prince was appointed by him governor of a province, and this fact, remarks Krishna Shastri, "testifies to the high statesmanship of Krishnarāya". In his third campaign against the King of Orissa, Kṛishṇadeva Rāya encamped at Bezwāda, laid siege to Kondapalli and captured it. The wife and a son (other than Prince Vīrabhadra) of the Rājā of Orissa and some Orissa nobles and generals fell into his hands on this occasion also. He then advanced north-eastwards as far as Simhāchalam in the

Vizagapatam district and forced his Orissan contemporary to come to terms. The last great military achievement of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya was his victory over Ismā'īl 'Ādil Shāh near Rāichūr on the 19th March, 1520, when the latter attempted to recover the Rāichūr Doāb. He is said to have overrun the Bijāpur territory and to have razed to the ground the fortress of Gulbarga. In short, the military conquests of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya enabled him to humble the pride of his northern foes and to extend the limits of his Empire up to the South Konkan in the west, Vizagapatam in the east and the extreme border of the peninsula in the south, while some islands and coasts of the Indian Ocean were within its sphere of influence. During the last few years of his life he devoted his attention to the organisation of the Empire in all respects and to works of peaceful administration.

Kṛishṇadeva Rāya maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese and granted them some concessions, since, writes Sewell, "he benefited largely by the import of horses and other requisites". In 1510 the Portuguese governor, Albuquerque, solicited his permission to build a fort at Bhatkal, which was granted after the Portuguese had captured Goa from the Muslims. The Portuguese traveller, Paes, praises him in eloquent terms: "He is the most learned and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners and receives them kindly; asking all about their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice, but subject to certain fits of rage . . . he is by rank a greater lord than any, by reason of what he possesses in armies and territories, but it seems that he has in fact nothing compared to what a man like him ought to have, so gallant and perfect is he in all things."

The reign of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya not only marked the climax in the territorial expansion of the Vijayanagar Empire, but was also remarkable for the encouragement and development of art and letters. Himself an accomplished scholar, the Rāya was a generous patron of learning. He was "in no way less famous", writes Krishna Shastri, "for his religious zeal and catholicity. He respected all sects of the Hindu religion alike, though his personal leanings were in favour of Vaishṇavism. . . . Krishnarāya's kindness to the fallen enemy, his acts of mercy and charity towards the residents of captured cities, his great military prowess which endeared him alike to his feudatory chiefs and to his subjects, the royal reception and kindness that he invariably bestowed upon foreign embassies, his imposing personal appearance, his genial

look and polite conversation which distinguished a pure and dignified life, his love for literature and for religion, and his solicitude for the welfare of his people, and above all, the most fabulous wealth that he conferred as endowments on temples and Brāhmaṇas, mark him out indeed as the greatest of the South Indian monarchs who sheds a lustre on the pages of history." In fact, the Vijayanagar Empire rose, during his reign, to the zenith of its glory and prosperity, when the old Turko-Afghān Sultānate was almost a shrivelled and attenuated carcase and was soon to be swept away by a fresh Turkish invasion.

But dangers lurked for the Vijayanagar Empire in the ambition of her powerful neighbours in the north and in the attitude of her viceroys, two of whom, the viceroy of Madura and the viceroy who was in charge of the central block of the kingdom, rebelled even during the last days (1528 or 1529) of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya. The former was brought back to submission before the death of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya, but the latter had to be "dealt with only at the beginning of his successor's reign".

Kṛishṇadeva Rāya died in A.D. 1529 or 1530 and was succeeded by his half-brother, Achyuta Rāya, who, as epigraphic and literary evidences show, was not "altogether the craven that he is represented by Nuniz to have been". He chastised the rebel viceroy of Madura and reduced to obedience the Rājā of Travancore, who had given shelter to the former. But he soon committed the blunder of relaxing his personal hold on the administration, which fell under the control of his two brothers-in-law, both named Tirumala. This irritated the other viceroys, who formed a rival party under the leadership of three brothers, Rāma, Tirumala and Venkata, of the Āravīḍu dynasty, connected by marriage with the reigning Tuluva dynasty. The kingdom was consequently plunged into troubles which continued throughout the whole course of its imperial history and did not cease till it entirely disappeared. After the death of Achyuta Rāya in A.D. 1541 or 1542, his son, Venkatādri or Venkata I, ascended the throne, but his reign did not last for more than six months and the crown then passed to Sadāsiva, a nephew of Achyuta. Sadāsiva Rāya was a mere puppet in the hands of his minister, Rāma Rāya, of the Āravīḍu dynasty, who was the *de facto* ruler of the State. Rāma Rāya was endowed with ability and was determined to restore the power of the Vijayanagar Empire, which had sunk low after the death of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya. One important feature of Rāma Rāya's policy was his active interference in the quarrels among the Deccan Sultānates, in alliance first with one and then with another. His

enterprises were, indeed, successful for the time being. But these made him over-confident and haughty and ultimately proved to be a cause of disaster for the Empire. In 1543 Rāma Rāya formed an alliance with Ahmadnagar and Golkundā with a view to attacking Bijāpur. But his object was baffled by the diplomacy of the Bijāpur minister, Asad Khān, who concluded peace separately with Burhān Nizām Shāh and Rāma Rāya, and thus broke up the coalition. A change of alliance took place in 1558, when Bijāpur, Golkundā and Vijayanagar joined against Ahmadnagar and invaded it. On this occasion the army of Vijayanagar alienated the people of Ahmadnagar.

The haughty conduct of the Vijayanagar army kindled the long-standing, though smouldering, hostility of the Sultānates of the Deccan against Vijayanagar, and all, with the exception of that of Berar, joined in a coalition against it, which was cemented by matrimonial alliances. The allied Deccan Sultāns fought against Vijayanagar on the 23rd January, 1565, at a site marked by the two villages of Rāksas and Tagdi. This battle resulted in the defeat of the huge Vijayanagar army with immense losses. "The victors," writes the author of *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir*, "captured jewels, ornaments, furniture, camels, tents, camp-equipage, drums, standards, maidservants, menservants, and arms and armour of all sorts in such quantity that the whole army was enriched." "The plunder was so great," notes Ferishta, "that every private man in the allied army became rich in gold, jewels, tents, arms, horses and slaves, the kings permitting every person to retain what he acquired, reserving the elephants only for their own use." Husain Nizām Shāh killed Rāma Rāya with his own hand and exclaimed: "Now I am avenged of thee! Let God do what He will to me." The magnificent city of Vijayanagar was sacked and deprived of its splendour by the invading army in a manner which has been described by Sewell as follows: "The third day saw the beginning of the end. The victorious Mussalmāns had halted on the field of battle for rest and refreshment, but now they had reached the capital, and from that time forward for a space of five months Vijayanagar knew no rest. The enemy had come to destroy and they carried out their object relentlessly. . . . Nothing seemed to escape them. They broke up the pavilions standing on the huge platform from which the kings used to watch the festivals, and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings forming the temple of Viṭṭhalasvāmī near the river, and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crowbars

and axes, they carried on day after day their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been wrought, and wrought so suddenly, on so splendid a city; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, and on the next seized, pillaged, and reduced to ruins, amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors beggaring description."

The so-called battle of Talikota is indeed one of the decisive battles in the history of India. It destroyed the chance of Hindu supremacy in the south, which was left open to the invasions of the rulers of a new Turkish dynasty, till the rise of the Marātha power in the seventeenth century. Undoubtedly the battle did vital damage to the Vijayanagar Empire, but recent researches have proved that it did not disappear altogether as a result of it. "Talikota," remarks a modern writer aptly, "was the climacteric, but not the grand climacteric of the Vijayanagar Empire." In fact, the Empire continued to exist till the early part of the seventeenth century under the rulers of the Āraviḍu dynasty, "before it got weakened and dismembered—weakened by the constant invasions from the north and dismembered by the dissatisfaction and rebellion of the viceroys within".

The victorious Sultānates did not ultimately gain much as a result of this battle. Their alliance was soon dissolved and there was a recrudescence of mutual jealousy. This afforded the Vijayanagar Empire the opportunity for recuperation under Rāma Rāya's brother, Tirumala. He returned to Vijayanagar after the Muslims had left it, but after a short stay there went to Penugondā, and restored the prestige and power of the Empire to such an extent as to be able to interfere in the affairs of the Muslim kingdoms. Towards the end of his reign, in about A.D. 1570, he dispensed with the phantom of the nominal ruler, Sadāsiva, and usurped the throne for the Āravīḍu dynasty to which he belonged. His son and successor, Ranga II, continued after him his policy of increasing the efficiency of the Empire. Ranga II was succeeded about A.D. 1586 by his brother, Venkata II, who had his headquarters at Chandragiri and died after a glorious reign in A.D. 1614. He may be regarded as the last great ruler of Vijayanagar, who kept the Empire intact with the exception that in A.D. 1612 Rājā Oedyar founded, with his permission, the kingdom of Mysore, on the extinction of the viceroyalty of Srirangapatan. His death was the signal for the dismemberment of the Empire. It was followed by a war of succession, and the consequent rise of disintegrating forces. These could not be checked by Ranga III, the last important ruler

of Vijayanagar, in spite of his best attempts, owing to the selfish attitude of the rebel vassals of the Empire and the ambition of the Muslim States of Bijāpur and Golkundā. Thus the Hindu feudatories of the Vijayanagar Empire proved to be her enemies in the long run. Their "insane pride, blind selfishness, disloyalty and mutual dissensions" largely facilitated the conquest of the Hindu Deccan by the Muslim States of Bijāpur and Golkundā. Further, subordinate viceroys, like the Chiefs of Seringapatam and Beḍnūr (Keḷadi, Ikkeri), and the Nāiks of Madura and Tanjore, carved out independent kingdoms for themselves.

B. *Splendour and Wealth of Vijayanagar*

Foreign travellers who visited India during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have left glowing accounts of the Empire of Vijayanagar. The city of Vijayanagar was encompassed by massive fortifications and was of enormous size. The Italian traveller, Nicolo Conti, who visited it about A.D. 1420 writes: "The circumference of the city is sixty miles; its walls are carried up to the mountains and enclose the valleys at their foot, so that its extent is thereby increased. In this city there are estimated to be ninety thousand men fit to bear arms. . . . The King is more powerful than all the other kings of India." 'Abdur Razzāq, who came to India from Persia and went to Vijayanagar in A.D. 1442–1443, observes: "The country is so well populated that it is impossible in a reasonable space to convey an idea of it. In the King's treasury there are chambers with excavations in them, filled with molten gold, forming one mass. All the inhabitants of the country, whether high or low, even down to the artificers of the bazar, wear jewels and gilt ornaments in their ears and around their necks, arms, wrists and fingers." Domingos Paes, a Portuguese, who has recorded a detailed description of Vijayanagar, writes: "Its King has much treasure and many soldiers and many elephants, for there are numbers of these in this country. . . . In this city you will find men belonging to every nation and people, because of the great trade which it has and the many precious stones there, principally diamonds. . . . This is the best provided city in the world, and is stocked with provisions such as rice, wheat, grains, Indian corn, and a certain amount of barley and beans, moong, pulses, horse-grain and many other seeds which grow in this country, which are the food of the people, and there is a large store of these and very cheap. . . . The streets and markets are full of laden oxen without count. . . ." Edoardo Barbosa, who was present in India in

A.D. 1516, describes Vijayanagar as "of great extent, highly populous and the seat of an active commerce in country diamonds, rubies from Pegu, silks of China and Alexandria, and cinnabar, camphor, musk, pepper and sandal from Malabar".

C. *Economic Condition of the Vijayanagar Empire*

It is clear from foreign accounts, and also other sources, that unbounded prosperity prevailed in the Vijayanagar Empire. Agriculture flourished in different parts of the realm and the State pursued a wise irrigation policy. The principal industries related to textiles, mining and metallurgy, and the most important of the minor industries was perfumery. Craftsmen's and merchants' guilds played an important part in the economic life of the kingdom. 'Abdur Razzāq writes: '"The tradesmen of each separate guild or craft have their shops close to one another." Paes also observes: "There were temples in every street, for these appertain to institutions like the confraternities you know of in our parts, of all the craftsmen and merchants."

The most remarkable feature in the economic condition of the kingdom was commerce, inland, coasting and overseas. The most important port on the Malabar coast was Calicut, and, according to 'Abdur Razzāq, the Empire "possessed 300 seaports". It had commercial relations with the islands in the Indian Ocean, the Malay Archipelago, Burma, China, Arabia, Persia, South Africa, Abyssinia and Portugal. The principal articles of export were cloth, rice, iron, saltpetre, sugar and spices, and the imports into the Empire were horses, elephants, pearls, copper, coral, mercury, China silks and velvet. The cheap means of transport for inland trade were *kāvadis*, head-loads, pack-horses, pack-bullocks, carts and asses. Ships were in use for coasting and overseas trade. According to Barbosa, South India got its ships built in the Maldive Islands. Epigraphic evidence proves that the rulers of Vijayanagar maintained fleets and the people there were acquainted with the art of ship-building before the advent of the Portuguese. We have, however, no definite knowledge as to how the Vijayanagar Empire "dealt with the important question of ocean transport".

The coinage of the Vijayanagar Empire was of various types, both in gold and copper, and there was one specimen of a silver coin. The coins bore on them emblems of different gods and animals varying according to the religious faith of the rulers. The prices of articles were low. The accounts of the foreign travellers tell us that the upper classes of the people had a high standard of living;

but we know from inscriptions that the common people groaned under the weight of heavy taxation, collected with rigour by the local governors, who were, however, sometimes restrained by the supreme rulers.

D. Social Life in the Vijayanagar Empire

Accounts of foreign travellers, inscriptions, and literature, contain copious references regarding the different aspects of the social life of the people in the Vijayanagar Empire, of which we can study here only the more striking ones. Women in general occupied a high position in society, and instances of the active part they took in the political, social and literary life of the country are not rare. Besides being trained in wrestling, handling swords and shields, music and other fine arts, some of them at any rate received a fair amount of literary education. Nuniz writes: "He (the King of Vijayanagar) has also women who wrestle, and others who are astrologers and soothsayers; and he has women who write all the accounts of expenses that are incurred inside the gates, and others whose duty it is to write all the affairs of the kingdom and compare their books with those of the writers outside; he has women also for music, who play instruments and sing. Even the wives of the King are well-versed in music. . . . It is said that he has judges, as well as bailiffs and watchmen who every night guard the palace, and these are women." Plurality of wives was a recognised practice, especially among the wealthy classes, and child marriage was the usual custom. The evil practice of exacting exorbitant dowries was greatly prevalent among those who were well placed in life. The State occasionally interfered in social affairs to settle disputes among various communities. The rite of *Satī*, or women burning themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands, was very common in Vijayanagar, and the Brāhmaṇas freely sanctioned it. Being held in high esteem by the rulers, the Brāhmaṇas exercised a predominant influence not merely in social and religious matters but also in the political affairs of the State. Nuniz describes them as "honest men, given to merchandise, very acute and of much talent, very good at accounts, lean men and well formed, but little fit for hard work".

There were no strict restrictions in matters of diet. Besides fruits, vegetables and oil, meat of all kinds, excepting that of oxen or cows, for which the people had great veneration, was taken by the general population; but the Brāhmaṇas never killed

or ate any "live thing". Nuniz gives the following description about the diet of the Vijayanagar Kings:

"These Kings of Bisnaga eat all sorts of things, but not the flesh of oxen or cows, which they never kill because they worship them. They eat mutton, pork, venison, partridges, hares, doves, quail, and all kinds of birds; even sparrows and rats, and cats, and lizards, all of which are sold in the market of the city of Bisnaga.

"Everything has to be sold alive so that each may know what he buys—this at least so far as concerns game—and there are fish from the rivers in large quantities."

If the statements of Paes and Nuniz be true, this was, remarks Dr. Smith, "a curious dietary for princes and people, who in the time of Krishnadeva Rāya and Achyuta Rāya were zealous Hindus with a special devotion to certain forms of Vishnu". Most probably rats, cats and lizards were eaten by the lower section of the people, who formed the non-Aryan element in the Vijayanagar population.

The foreign travellers refer to numerous blood sacrifices in the kingdom. According to Paes, the King used to witness the sacrifice of 24 buffaloes and 150 sheep, the animals being decapitated by a single blow of a large sickle. On the last day of the famous "nine days festival" 250 buffaloes and 4,500 sheep were slaughtered.

E. Art and Literature

The Vijayanagar Empire has to its credit brilliant cultural and artistic achievements. The Emperors were patrons of all languages—Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil and Kannaḍa, and under their fostering care some of the finest pieces of literature were produced. Sāyana, the famous commentator of the Vedas, and his brother, Mādhava, flourished during the early days of Vijayanagar rule and were deeply attached to the State. The reign of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya was of special importance in this branch of activity as in all others. It marked "the dawn of a new era in the literary history of South India. Himself a scholar, a musician and poet, he loved to gather around him poets, philosophers, and religious teachers whom he honoured with munificent gifts of land and money". He wrote his *magnum opus*, *Āmuktamālyadā*, in Telugu, in the introduction to which he refers to five Sanskrit works written by him. This book is not merely of religious interest but also of great historical importance for the reign of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya. In his court "flourished the '*Asṭadiggajas*', 'the eight elephants' (famous poets), who supported the world of (Telugu) literature". His poet laureate, Peddana, enjoyed a wide reputation and held a high

position among Telugu writers. Even the rulers of the Āravīḍu dynasty patronised poets and religious teachers, and Telugu literature flourished under them with "reinforced vigour". There were also authors among the petty chiefs and relatives of the emperors. Works on music, dancing, drama, grammar, logic, philosophy, etc., received encouragement from the emperors and their ministers. In short, the Vijayanagar Empire was a "synthesis of South Indian culture".

Along with the growth of culture we have a remarkable development of art and architecture. The ruins of the old capital of this



VIṬṬHALASVĀMĪ TEMPLE, VIJAYANAGAR

Empire proclaim to the world that there evolved, in the days of its glory, a distinct style of architecture, sculpture and painting by native artists. The famous Hazāra temple, built during the reign of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya, is, remarks Longhurst, "one of the most perfect specimens of Hindu temple architecture in existence". The Viṭṭhalasvāmī temple is also a fine example of Vijayanagar style. In the opinion of Fergusson, it "shows the extreme limit in florid magnificence to which the style advanced". The art of painting attained a high degree of excellence, and the art of music rapidly developed. Some new works on the subject of music were produced. Kṛishṇadeva Rāya and the Regent, Rāma Rāya, were proficient

in music. Theatres provided amusement for the people of the kingdom.

Epigraphic and literary evidence clearly shows that the rulers of Vijayanagar were of pious disposition and devoted to Dharma. But they were not fanatics. Their attitude towards the prevailing four sects, Saiva, Bauddha, Vaishṇava and Jaina, and even alien creeds, Christian, Jewish and Moorish, was liberal. Barbosa writes: "The King allows such freedom that every man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance, and without enquiry, whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor or Hindu."

F. Administration of the Vijayanagar Empire

The Vijayanagar Empire gradually developed a centralised administration with all its branches carefully organised No doubt, for the task which they set before themselves, its rulers had to maintain a strong army and also to undertake military expeditions, but it does not seem to be correct to describe their State as an essentially military one based on force and condemn it as an organisation which "contained no principle of development; . . . represented no ideal of human progress and therefore could not be lasting", as a modern writer has done. As a matter of fact, with the expansion of the Empire, its rulers organised the administration with such efficiency as served to remove the disorders that had prevailed during the periods of war and facilitate the pursuit of peaceful activities in various fields.

As in other medieval governments, the King was the fountain-head of all power in the Vijayanagar State. He was the supreme authority in civil, military as well as judicial affairs, and also often intervened to settle social disputes. But he was not an irresponsible despot, neglecting the interests of the kingdom and ignoring the rights and wishes of the people. The Vijayanagar kings knew how to secure the good-will of the people; and by their liberal policy they "conduced towards bringing peace and plenty into the kingdom". "A crowned King," writes Krishnadeva Rāya in his *Āmuktamālyadā*, "should always rule with an eye towards *Dharma*." He further says that "a King should rule collecting round him people skilled in statecraft, should investigate the mines yielding precious metals in his kingdom and extract the same, should levy taxes from his people moderately, should counteract the acts of his enemies by crushing them with force, should be friendly, should protect one and all of his subjects,

should put an end to the mixing up of the castes among them, should always try to increase the merit of the Brāhmaṇas, should strengthen his fortress and lessen the growth of the undesirable things and should be ever mindful of the purification of his cities . . ."

The King was assisted in the task of administration by a council of ministers, appointed by him. Though the Brāhmaṇas held high offices in the administration and had considerable influence, the ministers were recruited not only from their ranks but also from those of the Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas. The office of a minister was "sometimes hereditary and sometimes rested on selection". Both 'Abdur Razzāq and Nuniz refer to the existence of a sort of secretariat. Besides the ministers, the other officers of the State were the chief treasurer; the custodians of the jewels; an officer who was to look after the commercial interests of the State; the prefect of the police, who was responsible for the prevention of crime and maintenance of order in the city; the chief master of the horse; and subordinate officials like the *bhāṭs*, who sang the praise of the kings, the *betel*-bearers or personal attendants of the King, the calendar-makers, the engravers and the composer of inscriptions.

A magnificent court was maintained by the kings of Vijayanagar in the capital city at a huge cost of money. It was attended by nobles, priests, litterateurs, astrologers and musicians, and festivals were celebrated with great pomp and grandeur.

The Empire was divided for administrative purposes into several provinces (*rājya, maṇḍala, chāvaḍi*), which had again subdivisions like *venṭhe*,[1] *nāḍu*,[2] *sīma*, village and *sthala*[3] in the Karnātaka portion, and *koṭṭam*,[4] *parru*, *nāḍu* and village in the Tamil portion. It is very difficult to state the exact number of provinces in the Empire. Some writers relying on Paes write that the Empire was divided into 200 provinces. But the foreign traveller evidently "confounds the tributary kings with the provincial viceroys, and these again with the minor nobles who were merely officials in the government". According to H. Krishna Shastri, the Empire was divided into six principal provinces. Each province was under a viceroy, *nāyaka* or *nāik*,[5] who might be a member of the royal house,

[1] A territorial division higher than a *nāḍu*.

[2] A territorial division higher than a village.

[3] A portion of land comprising several fields.

[4] A territorial division higher than a *parru*, which again was higher than a *nāḍu*.

[5] The designation of Nāik was also given to the collectors of customs and military commanders.

or an influential noble of the State, or some descendant of the old ruling families. Each viceroy exercised civil, military and judicial powers within his jurisdiction, but he was required to submit regular accounts of the income and expenditure of his charge to the central government and render it military aid in times of need. Further, he was liable to severe punishment by the King if he proved to be a traitor or oppressed the people, and his estate could be confiscated to the State if he made default in sending one-third of his income to the latter. Though the *nāiks* were generally severe in raising revenue from the people, they were not unmindful of beneficial work like the encouragement of agriculture, the plantation of new villages, protection of religion and erection of temples and other buildings. But they were greatly responsible for the disorders which prevailed in Southern India during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the power of Vijayanagar disappeared for ever.

The Vijayanagar rulers inherited and continued to maintain a healthy and vigorous system of local administration, with the village as the lowest unit. Each village was a self-sufficient unit. The village assembly, like the *Panchāyat* of Northern India, conducted the administration of the area under its charge—executive, judicial and police—through its hereditary officers like the *senateova* or the village accountant, the *talara* or the village watchman or commandant, the *begāra* or the superintendent of forced labour, and others. These village officers were paid either by grants of land or a portion of agricultural produce. The heads of commercial groups or corporations seem "to have formed an integral part of the village assemblies". The King maintained a link with the village administration through his officer called the *Mahānāyakāchārya*, who exercised a general supervision over it.

Land revenue, known as *śist*, was the principal source of income of the Vijayanagar State. It had an efficient system of land revenue administration, under a department called the *aṭhavane*. Lands were classified under three heads for the purpose of assessment—wet land, dry land, and orchards and woods; and the assessments to be paid by the tenants were clearly indicated. To meet the heavy burdens of the State, and solve the problem of obtaining men and money to withstand its enemies, the Vijayanagar Emperors gave up the traditional rate of assessment at one-sixth of the produce and increased it to some extent. It is difficult to accept the statement of Nuniz that the "husbandmen had to pay one-tenth of their produce". The Vijayanagar rulers adopted the "principle of differential taxation", that is, levied taxes according

to the relative fertility of the lands. Besides the land tax, the *ryots* had to pay other kinds of taxes like grazing tax, marriage tax, etc. Other sources of income of the State were the revenue from customs duties; tolls on roads; revenue from gardening and plantations; and taxes levied on dealers in goods of common consumption, manufacturers and craftsmen, potters, washermen, shoemakers, barbers, mendicants, temples and prostitutes. Taxes were paid both in cash and kind, as during the days of the Cholas.

There is no doubt that the incidence of taxation was heavy and the provincial governors and revenue officials often practised oppression on the people. But at the same time there are instances to show that the Government redressed the grievances of the people on complaints being made to it and sometimes reduced or remitted taxes, and that the people could appeal directly to the King in time of need. The Empire could certainly not last for about three centuries on a systematic policy of extortion and oppression.

The King was the supreme judge, but there were regular courts and special judicial officers for the administration of justice. Sometimes, disputes were settled by the State officials with the co-operation of the local bodies. The only law of the land was not "the law of the Brāhmaṇas which is that of the priests", as Nuniz would ask us to believe, but was based on traditional regulations and customs, strengthened by the constitutional usage of the country, and its observance was strictly enforced. Severe punishment was inflicted on guilty persons. These penalties were chiefly of four kinds—fines, confiscation of property, ordeals and death. Death or mutilation was the punishment for crimes like theft, adultery and treason. Sometimes the criminals were "cast down before the feet of an elephant, that they may be killed by its knees, trunk and tusks". Official oppression in the sphere of justice was not absent, but the State occasionally granted remedies against it, and it was also "sometimes successfully checked by the united opposition of corporate bodies".

Like the Hoysalas, the rulers of Vijayanagar had a carefully organised military department, called *Kandāchāra*, under the control of the *Dandanāyaka* or *Dannāyaka* (Commander-in-Chief), who was assisted by a staff of minor officials. The State maintained a large and efficient army, the numerical strength of which was not, however, uniform all through. The regular troops of the King were, in times of need, reinforced by auxiliary forces of the feudatories and nobles. The several component parts of the army were the infantry, recruited from people of different classes and creeds, occasionally including even Muslims; the cavalry, strengthened by

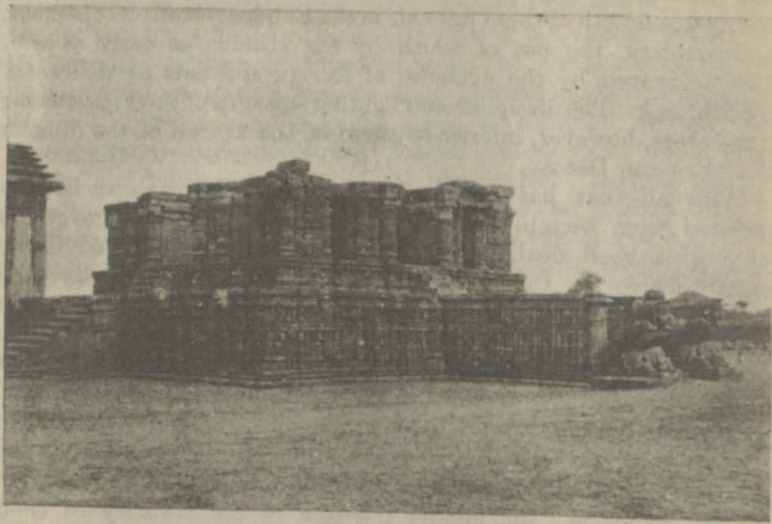
the recruitment of good horses from Ormuz through the Portuguese, owing to a dearth of these animals in the Empire; elephants; camels; and artillery, the use of which by the Hindus as early as A.D. 1368 is proved by the evidence of foreign accounts as well as of inscriptions. The discipline and fighting strength of the Vijayanagar army were, however, inferior to those of the armies of the Muslim States of the Deccan.

With all that has been said above, the Vijayanagar Empire suffered from certain defects. Firstly, the provincial governors enjoyed a good deal of independence, which contributed in no small degree to the weakening of the central authority and ultimately to the disintegration of the Empire. Secondly, the Empire failed to develop a sustained commercial activity in spite of various facilities. "This failure," remarks Dr. Aiyangar justly, "proved a vital defect in the imperial career of Vijayanagar, and made a permanent Hindu Empire impossible." Thirdly, in consideration of temporary gains, the Emperors allowed the Portuguese to settle on the west coast and thus "principles of profit" overrode "the greater question of the stability of their Empire".

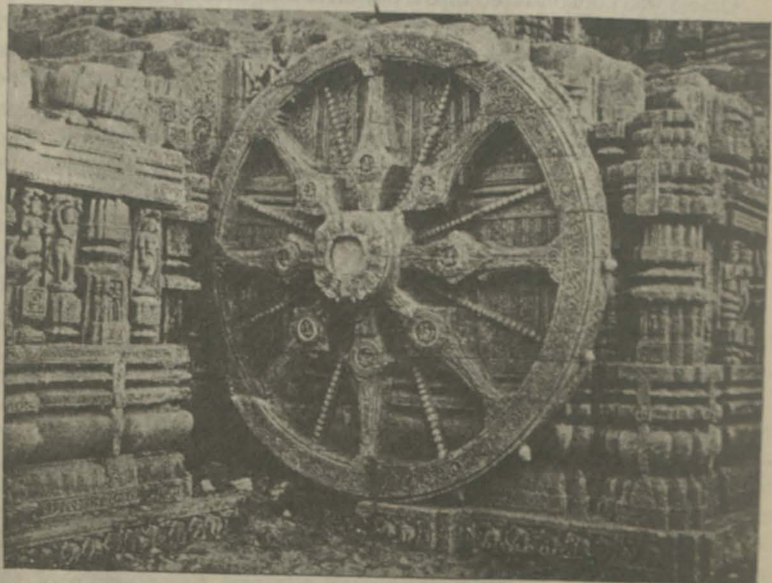
The Kingdom of Orissa

Orissa was consolidated into a powerful kingdom by Anantavarman Choḍa Ganga during his long reign of more than seventy years (*cir.* 1076–1148). It appears from several inscriptions that the kingdom then extended from the mouth of the Ganges to the mouth of the Godāvarī in the south. Choḍa Ganga's achievements in the domain of peace were also remarkable. He was a patron of religion, and of Sanskrit as well as Telugu literature. The great temple of Jagannāth at Purī stands as a brilliant monument to "the artistic vigour and prosperity of Orissa during his reign". The successors of Choḍa Ganga effectively checked the invasions of the Muslims and maintained the prosperity of their kingdom. The most famous of them was Narasimha I (1238–1264), who, besides achieving a remarkable success against the Muslims of Bengal, probably completed the construction of the temple of Jagannāth at Purī and built the great temple of the Sun-God at Koṇārak in the Purī district. After the death of Narasimha, the fortunes of the dynasty began to decline, and it was supplanted in about A.D. 1434–1435 by a solar dynasty, which ruled in Orissa for more than a century.

The founder of the new dynasty, Kapilendra, was endowed with considerable ability and vigour, and restored the prestige of the



BLACK PAGODA, DANCING HALL, KOṆĀRAK



CHARIOT WHEEL, KOṆĀRAK

kingdom of Orissa, which had sunk low during the reigns of the later Gangas. He suppressed the powerful rebels in his own country, fought successfully with the Bahmanīs of Bīdar and the rulers of Vijayanagar, succeeded in extending his dominions from the Ganges to the Kāverī, and even marched with a victorious army to the vicinity of Bīdar in the heart of the Bahmanī kingdom. It is stated in the Gopināthpur inscription that he took possession of Udayagiri, the seat of a Vijayanagar viceroyalty, and Conjeeveram. The beginning of the reign of the next ruler, Purushottama (A.D. 1470–1497), was marked by certain disorders during which the kingdom of Orissa lost its southern half from the Godāvarī downwards. Sāluva Narasimha captured the country to the south of the Kṛishṇā and the Bahmanīs seized the Godāvarī-Kṛishṇā Doāb. But towards the end of his reign Purushottama recovered the Doāb and regained a part of the Andhra country as far as the modern Guntur district. It cannot be said with certainty if he recovered any of the Tamil districts of the empire of Kapilendra.

Purushottama's son and successor, Pratāparudra (1497–1540), a contemporary and disciple of Chaitanya, inherited a kingdom extending from the Hugli and Midnāpur districts of Bengal to the Guntur district of Madras, and including also a part of the highlands of Telingāna. But it was not destined to maintain this extent for long owing to the aggressions of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya of Vijayanagar and of the growing Qutb Shāhī kingdom of Golkundā on the eastern coast. As a result of three campaigns, Pratāparudra had to cede to his more powerful Vijayanagar contemporary that portion of his kingdom which lay to the south of the Godāvarī. The Sultān Quli Qutb Shāh of Golkundā invaded the kingdom of Orissa in 1522.

Some believe that this political decline of Orissa was a sequel to the loss of martial spirit by her rulers and people due to the effect of Vaishṇavism preached by Chaitanya. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the kingdom of Orissa lost its old power from the beginning of the sixteenth century. About A.D. 1541–1542 the dynasty of Kapilendra was supplanted by the Bhoi dynasty, which was so called because its founder, Govinda, formerly a minister of Pratāparudra, belonged to the Bhoi or writer caste. Govinda, his son and two grandsons reigned for about eighteen years. The dynasty was ousted, in about A.D. 1559, by Mukunda Harichandana, who did his best to save the kingdom of Orissa from Muslim invasions till his death in A.D. 1568, and whose alliance was sought by Akbar in pursuance of his policy of attacking the

Afghāns of Bengal from both sides. The Kararānī Sultāns of Bengal annexed Orissa in A.D. 1568. The Hindu renegade, Kālāpāhār, who had accompanied Sulaimān Kararānī's son, Bāyazīd, to Orissa, is said to have desecrated the temple of Jagannāth and even made attempts to destroy the wooden idols. Then began a Mughul-Afghān contest for the possession of Orissa.

Mewār

Some of the Rājput States were stirred with the spirit of revival on the dismemberment of the Turko-Afghān Empire. The most



CHITORGARH

(Affording a view of the Kīrtistambha at the upper right corner)

prominent of these was the Guhila principality of Mewār, where the Rājput genius unfolded itself so brilliantly and which for generations produced a succession of brave generals, heroic leaders, prudent rulers and some brilliant poets. As early as the seventh century A.D. the brave and chivalrous Rājputs of the Guhila clan established their power in this territory. We have already narrated how 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī besieged and captured Chitor, the capital of Mewār, and how Hamīr, or his son, delivered it from the hands of

the Muslims and retrieved the lost honour of his race. Hamīr died full of years possibly in A.D. 1364 "leaving a name still honoured in Mewār as one of the wisest and most gallant of her princes and bequeathing well-established and extensive power" to his son, Kshetra Simha. Kshetra Simha being killed in the course of a family quarrel in or about A.D. 1382 was succeeded by his son, Lākhā. On Lākhā's death after 1418 (?), his son, Mokala, ascended the throne of Mewār, but he was assassinated in or about A.D. 1431 by two of his uncles. The next Rānā of Mewār was Kumbha, one of the most famous rulers in the history of India. His reign was an important period in the annals of his country. Tod thus praises his achievements: "All that was wanting to augment her (Mewār's) resources against the storms which were collecting on the brows of Caucasus and the shores of Oxus, and were destined to burst on the head of his grandson, Sangha, was effected by Kumbha; who with Hamīr's energy, Lākhā's taste for arts, and a genius comprehensive as either or more fortunate, succeeded in all his undertakings, and once more raised the 'crimson banner' of Mewār upon the banks of the Ghaggar, the scene of Samarsi's defeat." Kumbha fought against the Muslim rulers of Mālwa and Gujarāt, and although success did not attend all his enterprises, he could hold his own position against his ambitious neighbours. He was also a mighty builder, to whom Mewār is indebted for some of her finest monuments. Of the eighty-four fortresses built for the defence of Mewār, thirty-two were erected by Kumbha. The most brilliant monument of his military and constructive genius is the fortress of *Kumbhalgarh*, "second to none in strategical importance or historical renown". Kumbha's *Jayastambha*, also called the *Kīrtistambha* (Tower of Fame), is another monument of his genius. Further, the Rānā was a poet, a man of letters and an accomplished musician. He was assassinated by his son, Udaya Karan, probably in A.D. 1469. This cruelty of Udaya's horrified the nobles, who acknowledged his younger brother, Rāyamalla, as the Rānā. Rāyamalla's sons quarrelled among themselves for the succession and ultimately one of them, Sangrāma, or Sanga, as he was popularly called, succeeded to the throne of Mewār in or about A.D. 1509. Sanga was endowed with remarkable military prowess. A hero of a hundred fields, he bore the scars of eighty wounds on his body in addition to having an eye blinded and a leg crippled. He fought successfully against Mālwa, Delhi and Gujarāt, and organised the financial resources and the military forces of Mewār with a view to building her supremacy on the break-up of the Delhi Sultānate. Thus a contest between him and any other power then trying to establish

supremacy in Northern India was inevitable. The battle of Khānua, to be described in a subsequent chapter, was a logical outcome of this fact.

Kāmarūpa and Assam

At the time of the advent of the Muslims in Bengal in the early thirteenth century, the Brahmaputra valley was parcelled out into a number of independent principalities, at war with one another. A line of Chutiya (a tribe of mixed Bodo-Shān stock) kings ruled over the tract east of the Subansiri and the Disang, while a strip to the south and south-east was under the control of some Bodo tribes. Further west was a Kachārī kingdom lying south of the Brahmaputra and extending probably half way across the Nowgong district. West of the Chutiyas on the north bank and of the Kachārīs on the south, were the domains of some petty chiefs called Bhuiyās. To the extreme west was situated the kingdom of Kāmarūpa, the western boundary of which was marked by the river Karatoyā and the eastern boundary varied according to the position of its hostile neighbours. It was known as the kingdom of Kāmata. The Āhoms, a section of the great Shān tribe, had appeared as a new element in the history of the Brahmaputra valley early in the thirteenth century, and checked the eastern expansion of the Kāmata kingdom, while its western neighbours, the Muslim Sultāns of Bengal, led several invasions into its territories with varying results.

Early in the fifteenth century a strong monarchy was established in Kāmata by the Khens with their capital at Kāmatāpur, a few miles to the south of Cooch Behār. The Khens ruled over Kāmata for about seventy-five years and their last ruler, Nilāmbar, was overthrown by 'Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh in about A.D. 1498. After a short period of confusion, Biswa Simha, of the Koch tribe, which was Mongoloid in origin, established a powerful kingdom with Koch Bihār, modern Cooch Bihār, as his capital, about A.D. 1515. The greatest ruler of this line was Biswa Simha's son and successor, Nara Nārāyan, during whose reign the kingdom of Kāmata grew in prosperity, and reached the zenith of its power. But in 1581 he was compelled to cede the portions of his kingdom to the east of the river Sankosh to his nephew, Raghu Dev. Thus the Koch kingdom was divided into two rival principalities, called Koch Bihār and Koch Hājo by the Muslims. Their feuds drew the intervention of the Āhoms and the Muslims, and in 1639 the western and the eastern States fell under the supremacy of the Muslims and the Āhoms respectively.

The Āhoms, a section of the Shān tribe, who appeared in Assam in about A.D. 1215, gradually consolidated their position and established a strong monarchy which lasted for six centuries. During the period under review they checked the eastward expansion of the kings of Kāmarūpa and the Sultāns of Bengal. The kingdom of the Āhoms became vulnerable to Muslim attacks only after the latter had subjugated Kāmarūpa. Thus 'Alā-u-dīn Husain Shāh of Bengal led an expedition into Assam when it was ruled by Suhenpha. In spite of the initial success of Muslim arms, this expedition had a disastrous end. There was no Āhom-Muslim conflict for more than thirty years, till the second phase of it began when invasions into Assam were conducted by some local Muhammadan chieftains of Bengal. But their attempts also failed by September, 1533. Thus the attempt of the Muslims of Bengal to conquer Assam ended in failure by the thirties of the sixteenth century. The history of Assam after this period will be treated in its proper place.

Nepāl

By the year A.D. 879 Nepāl possibly threw off the Tibetan yoke and came to have an independent history of its own. For two hundred years after this we know little about the kings ruling in Nepāl, but from the eleventh century Nepāl flourished under the Thākurīs. For more than two hundred years (1097–1326), the Karnātaka king Nānyadeva of Mithila and his successors claimed, from their capital at Simrāon, a sort of loose sovereignty over the local princes of Nepāl. In A.D. 1324, Harisimha of Tirhut, a descendant of Nānyadeva, invaded Nepāl, the reigning king of which, Jayarudramalla, submitted to him. With his headquarters at Bhatgāon, Harisimha gradually extended his power over the whole valley, and his kingdom had diplomatic relations with China in the fourteenth century. But at the same time Harisimha and his descendants "left undisturbed the local rulers, who acknowledged their hegemony, in the possession of the two other capitals, viz., Patan and Katmandu". In 1376 Jaya-Sthitimalla, grandson-in-law of the Malla king, Jayarudra (1320–1326), and son-in-law of Jagatsimha, a prince of the Karnātaka line of Harisimha, who had married Jayarudra's daughter, Nāyakadevī, seized the throne of the Mallas and established his authority over practically the whole of Nepāl. It was henceforth ruled by his descendants "in regular succession". He had three sons—Dharmamalla, Jyotirmalla and Kīrtimalla. They kept the kingdom undivided. By A.D. 1418 Harisimha's descendants lost their authority in Nepāl, and Jyotirmalla tried to exercise imperial

power. About A.D. 1426 Jyotirmalla was succeeded by his eldest son, Yakshamalla, who ruled for about half a century and was the greatest of the Malla rulers of Nepāl. But he committed a mistake before his death, between A.D. 1474 and 1476, in partitioning the kingdom among his sons and daughters. This led to the rise of the two rival principalities of Katmandu and Bhatgaōn, whose quarrels ultimately led to the conquest of Nepāl by the Gurkhās in A.D. 1768.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TURKO-AFGHĀNS IN INDIA, AND MORAL AS WELL AS MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF THE COUNTRY DURING THEIR RULE

I. The Turko-Afghān Government

A. The Central Government

THE Muslim State in India was a theocracy, the existence of which was theoretically justified by the needs of religion. The Sultān was considered to be Cæsar and Pope combined in one. In theory, indeed, his authority in religious matters was limited by the Holy Law of the Quran, and with the exception of 'Alā-ud-dīn, no Sultān could clearly divorce religion from politics. But in practice, the Muslim Sultān of India was a perfect autocrat, unchecked by any restrictions; and his word was law. The Sultāns at times paid, with two short breaks, only ceremonial allegiance to the Khalifahs of Baghdād and Egypt, but did not owe their power to them nor to the will of the people, though the Islamic theory of sovereignty was constitutional and democratic in character. In fact, the Muslim State in India was, to all intents and purposes, independent and autonomous, the Sultān being the mainspring of the entire system of administration. The real source of the Sultān's authority was military strength, and this was understood and acquiesced in, not merely by the unthinking rabble but also by the soldiers, the poets (e.g. Amīr Khusrav) and the *Ulemas* of the age. As the supreme head of the executive, the Sultān transacted the affairs of the State with the help of such officers and ministers as he might choose to select. The State being essentially military in character, the Sultān was the chief commander of forces; he was also the chief law-giver and the final court of appeal.

The autocracy of the Muslim Sultāns of India was the inevitable result of the then circumstances. They had to be constantly on their guard against the hostility of the Hindu States, the Hindu fighting communities and the Mongol invaders. This required a strong centralised government, which gradually made itself despotic. Further, there was no hereditary Muslim aristocracy, conscious of

its own rights and privileges and eager to assert these against royal despotism, although occasionally some nobles made their influence felt. There were also no popular assemblies, keen about constitutional liberty, and no strong public opinion, competent enough to oppose autocracy. Even the *Ulemas*, who exercised much influence in the State, had not the courage to openly oppose the Sultāns and depose an undesirable ruler in the same manner as Hildebrand deposed Henry IV. Succession to the Sultānate of Delhi was not determined by any recognised law, nor was there any definite principle. "Broadly speaking, the choice was limited, as a matter of convenience, to the surviving members of the deceased Sultān's family. The priority of birth, the question of efficiency, the nomination of the dead king—these considerations sometimes received some attention, but the decisive voice seems to have been that of the nobles, who usually preferred personal convenience to the interests of the State."

Even the most autocratic ruler cannot manage the task of administration single-handed. Thus the Sultāns of Delhi had to devise, from the beginning of their rule, an administrative machinery with a regular hierarchy of officers in charge of various departments, who, however, did not in any way check their authority but rather carried out their respective duties according to the former's orders. The Sultāns had a council of friends and trusted officers called the *Majlis-i-Khalwat*, which they consulted when important affairs of State demanded attention. The councillors might express their opinions, which at times had some influence on the administration; but these were not binding on the Sultān. The Sultān received all courtiers, *Khāns*, *Maliks*, and *Amīrs*, in a court called *Bār-i-Khās*. He sat as the supreme judge in the *Bār-i-Ām*, where he tried cases, received petitions of the people and heard their complaints. The highest officer in the Central Government was the Wazīr, who had control over the other departments of the State,—such as the *Diwān-i-Risālat* or the Department of Appeals, the *Diwān-i-Arz* or the Military Department, the *Diwān-i-Inshā* or the Correspondence Department, the *Diwān-i-Bandagān* or the Department of Slaves, the *Diwān-i-Qazā-i-Mamālik* or the Department of Justice, Intelligence and Posts, the *Diwān-i-Amīr Kohi* or the Department of Agriculture (created by Muhammad bin Tughluq), the *Diwān-i-Mustakhraj* or the Department to look after and realise arrears from collectors or agents (created by 'Alā-ud-dīn Khalji), *Diwān-i Khairāt* or the Department of Charity (in Fīrūz Shāh's reign), *Diwān-i Istihqāq* or the Department of Pensions,—and also over the Mint, the charitable institutions and the *Kārkhānās*. Besides the high officers in charge of the various departments, there were other

subordinate officers like the *Mustaufi-i Mamālik* or the Auditor General, whose duty was to check the expenditure of the State; the *Mushrif-i Mamālik*, who was in charge of the accounts of receipts; the *Majmudār*, who preserved the records of loans advanced by government; the *Khāzin* or the Treasurer; the *Amīr-i Behr* or the Controller of Boats; the *Bakhshi-i-Fauj* or Paymaster of the Forces, and others. The *Nāib-i-Wazīr-i-Mamālik* or the Deputy Wazīr did not enjoy a very high status. The Tughluq period was "the heyday of the Wazīrat in Muslim India", and from the days of the later Tughluqs the powers of the Wazīr grew enormously. But these began to decline in the time of the Sayyids and the office of the Wazīr became obscure under the Afghāns.

Justice was usually administered by the *Qāzī-ul-Qazāt*, or the Lord Chief Justice, who was aided by *Muftīs* to expound the law, which was based on the injunctions of the Quran, though rulers like 'Alā-ud-dīn and Muhammad bin Tughluq were guided by considerations of policy. The penal law was excessively severe, the penalties of mutilation and death being usually inflicted on the culprits. Force and torture were employed to extort confession. The judicial procedure does not seem to have been very regular. Cases were started without due enquiries and, on most occasions, received summary trials. The law of debt, as we know from Marco Polo, was severe; and the creditors often invoked royal assistance to realise their dues from the debtors. The *Kotwāl* was the custodian of peace and order; and another officer of the municipal police was the *Muhtasib*, whose duties were to keep a strict watch over the conduct of the people, to control the markets and to regulate weights and measures. The Sultān kept himself informed of the movements of the people through a large number of spies. The old forts and castles were utilised as prisons. The prison "regulations were lax, and corruption prevailed among the officers".

The fiscal policy of the Turkish Sultāns of India was modelled on the theory of finance of the Hanafī school of Muslim Jurists, which the former borrowed from the Ghaznavids whom they had supplanted. Thus the principal sources of revenue of the Delhi Sultānate were the *Kharāj* or land tax from the Hindu chiefs and landlords; land revenue obtained from the *Khālsā* or crown-lands, *iqtā's* or lands granted to followers and officers (usually military) for certain years or for the lifetime of the grantee, who was known as the *Muqta*, and other classes of lands; *Khams* or one-fifth of the spoils of war; and religious tax. Besides these, *abwābs* or cesses and other kinds of taxes like the house tax, grazing tax, water tax, etc., were levied on the people. The State also derived

some income from trade duties. The *jizya* was originally a sort of tax levied on the non-Muslims "in return for which they received protection of life and property and exemption from military service". But in course of time, a religious motive was attached to it, and in India it was the only extra burden which the Hindus had to bear. Taxes were paid both in cash and kind. We have already given the important points regarding the revenue reforms of the Khaljīs and the Tughluqs. It may be noted here that the revenue policy of the State, and the satisfactory working or otherwise of the revenue department, varied according to the personality of the rulers. While no important changes in revenue administration are recorded to have been effected by Iltutmish, and only a few attempts were made by Balban to make it orderly, 'Alā-ud-dīn's revenue policy was comprehensive, affecting all types of land tenures, and Muhammad bin Tughluq's vigorous but ill-advised revenue policy also deeply influenced the condition of the State. The rate of assessment also varied, being excessively high since the time of 'Alā-ud-dīn, who charged 50 per cent on the gross produce of the land. In spite of his general leniency, Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq does not seem to have reduced the scale as fixed by 'Alā-ud-dīn, and in the time of Muhammad bin Tughluq it was certainly not lower, if not higher, than this. The farming system was prevalent, and its lavish extension in the time of Fīrūz Shāh proved to be detrimental to the integrity of the State.

The standing army of the Sultānate consisted of the royal bodyguard, and the troops of the capital, which were, in times of need, reinforced by the levies sent by the provincial viceroys and the *Muqtas*, and the contingents of Hindu troops. Men of different nationalities, such as Turks, Khataians, Persians and Indians, were enlisted in the army. The main branches of the army were the infantry, including numerous archers, the cavalry, and the elephants. There was nothing like artillery, which came to be used effectively in later times; but rockets and naphtha balls, and a machine discharging balls by the force of gunpowder, were used, though not with much effect, as early as the reign of Iltutmish. Further, a sort of mechanical artillery, consisting of various crude machines, like *manjaniqs, mangonels, mangons*, through which fire-balls, fire-arrows, pieces of rock, stones, earthen or iron balls, bottles full of naphtha, and scorpions and other poisonous reptiles, could be hurled against the enemy, were used in siege-craft in medieval India.

The Turkish Sultāns of Delhi maintained a court,—though not so splendid as that of the Great Mughuls,—through which their majesty found expression. Harems, full of the wives and concubines of the Sultāns and princes of the royal blood, were kept in

the apartments of the royal palace. Culture of a rather limited type was patronised in these courts, but their maintenance must have caused a heavy drain on the economic resources of the country.

B. Administration of the Provinces

The direct influence of the Sultān was limited to the area within striking distance of his forts and outposts, and the distant provinces were placed in the charge of viceroys, who were called Nāib Sultāns. The number of provinces varied from twenty to twenty-five. A province was subdivided into smaller portions, which were in the charge of *Muqtas* or of *Āmils*; and there were further smaller units under *Shiqdārs*, whose jurisdiction did not extend over more than a few miles. Each province was "a replica of the Empire", and the Nāib Sultān exercised executive, judicial, and military functions in his territory almost as a despot, subject only to the control of the central government, which varied according to the strength or weakness of the latter. Muhammad bin Tughluq's failure to control the provinces encouraged his viceroys to declare independence. The viceroy was paid from the revenue of his province, and after meeting the cost of his administration he had to remit the surplus to the central exchequer. He maintained a local militia and had to render military aid, at times, to the Sultān. Thus his position was somewhat like that of a feudal baron of medieval Europe. The intrigues of the nobles, and lack of co-operation among the officers, usually hampered the good working of the provincial government; and consequently peace and order were not perfectly maintained. Besides the imperial provinces, large tracts of land had of necessity to be left in the hands of old Hindu chieftains, who were not interfered with in ruling their ancestral territories so long as they sent tributes and presents to Delhi. The village communities continued unaffected by the establishment of a new government in the country.

C. The Muslim Nobility

The nobility exercised a predominant influence in the State as generals, administrators and sometimes as king-makers. But it was not a hereditary, homogeneous and well-organised body as was the case with the nobles of France or of England. Though the Turks formed the majority in this class, there were in it also men of other nationalities, like Arabs, Afghāns, Abyssinians, Egyptians, people of Java, and Indians. Such a heterogeneous class could hardly be expected to work with a common aim or principle and offer a healthy check to royal absolutism. Naturally the nobles

often occupied themselves with their mutual rivalries and pursued selfish interests at the cost of the welfare of the State. "The nobility," remarks a modern writer, "was nothing more than a mere agglomeration of disintegrating atoms," which failed to "evolve a workable constitution for the country." The State might have derived some benefit from its aristocracy, but it suffered more from a gross caricature of debased feudalism, which was largely responsible for its dismemberment.

The Turko-Afghān machinery of administration, briefly outlined above, lacked the force of habit, derived from tradition, and of will, derived from national support, both of which are necessary for the security and long tenure of a government. Its military and feudal character, which was the inevitable result of the circumstances under which it grew, was opposed to the traditional ancient government of the land, though the medieval Rājput States might have afforded a parallel to it. By the nature of its growth, it could seldom be established on the goodwill and support of the people. As a matter of fact, a tie of mutual attachment between the rulers and the masses of the people was in many cases absent. The State grew on military strength, its rulers were, in most cases, concerned with measures calculated to strengthen their own authority; and its aristocracy, without any consistent policy, pursued selfish interests. Its collapse was inevitable when the Sultāns failed to command adequate force and the aristocracy grew more ambitious and turbulent.

2. Economic and Social Conditions

A. Economic

It is not easy to form an accurate idea of the economic condition of the vast numbers of the people of India, during the three centuries of Turko-Afghān rule. Some attempts have, however, been made recently to arrive at the facts of the matter by collecting incidental references from chronicles, the works of Amīr Khusrav, folklore and fiction, poetry and ballads, the writings of Hindu as well as Muslim mystics, works on practical arts and treatises on law and ethics, the accounts left by foreign travellers, and some official and private correspondence. The country was then famous for her untold wealth. We know from Ferishta how Mahmūd of Ghaznī carried off a vast booty, and it is striking that even after the thoughtless extravagance of Muhammad bin Tughluq, and the chronic disorders of the later Tughluq period, Tīmūr captured an enormous booty in Delhi. But the State did not pursue any comprehensive economic policy aiming at the improvement of the

condition of the people; and the few experiments of the Khaljīs or the Tughluqs did not produce permanent results. "On the whole," remarks a modern Muslim writer, "any big improvement in the method of production, a more equitable distribution of the economic wealth, or a better adjustment of the economic position of the various social classes, was outside the policy of the State."

India had, however, traditions of industrial organisation, through the guilds and crafts of the village communities and of the urban areas, and of widespread commerce, internal as well as external, which survived the shocks of political revolutions in spite of the absence of State guidance and support during the period under review. The Sultāns of Delhi, or, in later times, some of the minor provincial rulers, encouraged industries and trade only for their own political and administrative needs. Thus the royal *kārkhānās* or manufactories at Delhi sometimes employed 4,000 weavers of silk besides manufacturers of other stuffs to satisfy royal demands. There were no factories or large-scale industrial organisations such as we have to-day. In most cases the manufacturers dealt directly with the traders, though occasionally they disposed of their goods at fairs, and again sometimes a number of them were employed by some enterprising business men to manufacture goods under their supervision. Though agriculture formed the occupation of the bulk of the people, there were some important industries in the urban as well as rural areas of the country. These were the textile industry, including the manufacture of cotton cloth, woollen cloth and silks, the dyeing industry and calico-painting, the sugar industry, metal-work, stone and brick work, and the paper industry. The minor industries were cup-making, shoe-making, making of arms, especially bows and arrows, manufacture of scents, spirits and liquors, etc. Bengal and Gujarāt were especially renowned for the manufacture and export of textile goods. The excellence of Bengal goods has been highly praised by Amīr Khusrav, and foreign travellers, like Mauhan, who visited Bengal in A.D. 1406, Barthema, who came to India during the early part of the sixteenth century (1503–1508), and Barbosa, who came here about A.D. 1518.

The volume of India's internal trade during this period "was large except when thwarted by the monopoly of the State or rigid administrative control". Her commercial relations with the outside world also deserve notice. The sea-route connected her commercially with the distant regions of Europe, the Malay Islands and China, and other countries on the Pacific Ocean; and she had intercourse through land routes with Central Asia, Afghānistān, Persia, Tibet and Bhutān. The author of *Masālik-ul-absār* writes:

"Merchants of all countries never cease to carry pure gold into India, and to bring back in exchange commodities of herbs and gums." The chief imports were articles of luxury for the richer classes and horses and mules; and the principal exports consisted of varieties of agricultural goods, and textile manufactures, the minor ones being tutenag, opium, indigo-cakes, etc. Some countries round the Persian Gulf were entirely dependent on India for their food supply. The ports of Bengal and Gujarāt were then chiefly used for India's export trade. Barthema considered Bengal to be "the richest country in the world for cotton, ginger, sugar, grain and flesh of every kind".

The prices of goods were not uniform throughout the period. These were abnormally high in times of famine and scarcity, but very low in times of overproduction. Thus, owing to severe famines during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq, the price of corn rose to 16 and 17 *jitals* per seer and many people died of starvation. After Fīrūz Shāh's second attack on Sind, with the consequent scarcity in that province, the price of corn rose to 8 and 10 *jitals* per 5 seers, and of pulses to 4 and 5 *tankās* per maund, or 6.4 and 8 *jitals* per seer respectively. The reign of Ibrāhīm Lodī was again a period of exceptionally low prices. A man could then buy 10 maunds of corn, 5 seers of oil and 10 yards of coarse cloth for one *Buhlūlī* which was equivalent to 1.6 *jital* in value. The prices during 'Alā-ud-dīn's reign have been considered as normal. These were (calculating per maund)—wheat 7½ *jitals*, barley 4 *jitals*, paddy or rice 5 *jitals*, pulses 5 *jitals*, lentils 3 *jitals*, sugar (white) 100 *jitals*, sugar (soft) 60 *jitals*, mutton 10 *jitals*, and ghee (clarified butter) 16 *jitals*; muslins of Delhi cost 17 *tankās*[1] a piece, of 'Āligarh 6 *tankās*; and blankets of coarse stuff cost 6 *jitals* and those of finer quality 36 *jitals*[2] for each piece. Comparing

[1] The purchasing power of a *tankā* was about twelve times that of the present rupee.

[2] Comparative prices in the reigns of 'Alā-ud-dīn, Muhammad bin Tughluq and Fīrūz Shāh:

Commodities	'Alā-ud-dīn	Muhammad bin Tughluq	Fīrūz Shāh
	(prices in *jitals* per maund)		
Wheat	7½	12	8
Barley	4	8	4
Paddy	5	14	x
Pulses	5	x	
Lentils	3	4	4
Sugar (white)	100	80	x
Sugar (soft)	60	64	120, 140
Mutton	10	64	x
Ghee	16	x	100

(*J.A.S.B.*, 1935, Vol. I, Letters No. 2, p. 235.)

the prices of goods in the reigns of 'Alā-ud-dīn, Muhammad bin Tughluq and Fīrūz Shāh, we find that, generally speaking, these rose during the reign of the second Sultān but again went down almost to the previous level of 'Alā-ud-dīn's reign during the reign of Fīrūz Shāh. On the whole, food and goods were cheap in the Doāb area as well as in the provinces. Ibn Batūtah observes that he had nowhere seen "a country where the commodities sell cheaper" than in Bengal; eight *dirhams* were sufficient here for the annual expenses of a family of three. But we have no means of estimating the average income or cost of living of an Indian of those days. We should not, moreover, fail to note that the country, especially Bengal, suffered from an exceptional scarcity of money. It is, therefore, rather difficult to determine how far the people were benefited by the low prices of commodities then prevailing.

As regards the standard of living of the different classes of the society, the difference between that of the wealthier classes and of the peasants was "almost antipodal". While the ruling and official classes rolled in opulence and luxury, the tillers of the soil had a very low standard of living. The incidence of taxation must have weighed heavily on them, and their condition became miserable in times of famine, when no adequate relief measures could be provided. Amīr Khusrav significantly remarks that "every pearl in the royal crown is but the crystallised drop of blood fallen from the tearful eyes of the poor peasant". Bābur, who was struck with the scanty requirements of the Indian rural folk, writes: "People disappear completely where they have been living for many years in about a day and a half." Thus the peasants of Medieval India do not seem to have been much better off than their descendants of modern times. But, judged by standards of to-day, they had fewer needs. The villages being economically self-sufficient, the simple requirements of the rural population were supplied locally to their satisfaction. Further, in spite of political revolutions and intrigues at the metropolis, the villagers pursued their ordinary occupations of life with the utmost unconcern. Court politics seldom disturbed the even tenor of village life.

B. Social Life

It was a common practice with the Sultāns and the nobles to maintain slaves, male as well as female. The number of royal slaves (*Bandagān-i-khās*) was usually large. 'Alā-ud-dīn had 50,000 slaves and their number rose to 200,000 under Fīrūz Shāh. Much care was taken of them by their masters, as they formed a

useful source of service and sometimes of pecuniary gain. The Sultāns usually manumitted their slaves after some time, and some of the slaves rose to political and social eminence by dint of their merit and ability. Besides a large number of Indian slaves, of whom the Assam slaves were most liked because of their strong physique, male as well as female slaves were imported from other countries like China, Turkestān, and Persia. The prices of slaves fluctuated according to the courses of wars and famines. The institution of slavery might have served certain purposes for the rulers and the nobles; but at the same time it could not but produce some baneful social consequences. In fact, it was a "stamp of unprogressiveness" and an unhealthy feature of social life.

Dependence of women on their husbands, or other male relatives, was a prominent feature of social life among the Hindus as well as the Muslims. But they enjoyed a position of respect and were expected to observe strict fidelity in their conjugal life. They generally lived in seclusion in the sphere of their homes; and the *Purdah* system became more elaborate, both among the Hindus and the Muslims, except in some coastal towns in Gujarāt, owing chiefly to the general sense of insecurity of the period caused by inroads of foreign invaders, especially the Mongols. The culture of the women varied according to the classes to which they belonged. While the ordinary village women remained absorbed in their domestic duties, some belonging to the upper class cultivated arts and sciences. Rupamatī and Padmāvatī are good examples of educated ladies. Both boys and girls were married at an early age. The practice of *Satī*, or a wife burning herself on the funeral pyre of her husband, was widely prevalent among certain classes. According to Ibn Batūtah, a sort of permit had to be procured from the Sultān of Delhi before the burning of a widow. Though the general standard of social life was high, being marked by charity and other virtues, there were a few vices connected with the passion for wine and women.

3. Literature, Art and Architecture

A. Effect of the Impact of the Indian and the Islamic Civilisations

So immense was the assimilative potentiality of the old Indian civilisation that the earlier invaders of this country, the Greeks, the Sakas and the Huns, were absorbed within the fold of her population and completely lost their identity. But it did not

happen so with the Turko-Afghān invaders of India. In the wake of Muslim invasions, definite social and religious ideas, which differed fundamentally from those of Hindustān, entered into this country and a perfect absorption of the invaders by the original inhabitants could not be possible. The political relations between the new-comers and the indigenous people were sometimes characterised by bitter strife. But whenever two types of civilisation come into close contact with each other for centuries, both are bound to be influenced mutually. Thus, through long association, the growth of the numbers of the converted Indo-Muslim community, and the influence of several liberal movements in India, the Hindu and Muslim communities came to imbibe each other's thoughts and customs; and, beneath the ruffled surface of storm and stress, there flowed a genial current of mutual harmony and toleration in different spheres of life. As a matter of fact, both Hindus and Muslims had mutual admiration for each other's culture, since the early days of the advent of Islam into India, and one of the sources of Muslim mysticism was Indian. Famous Muslim scholars and saints lived and laboured in India during the Medieval period, and they helped the dissemination of the ideas of Islamic philosophy and mysticism in this land. The wholesome spirit of mutual toleration found expression in the growing veneration of the Hindus for the Muslim saints, particularly of the mystic school, and a corresponding Muhammadan practice of venerating Hindu saints; and it ultimately led to the common worship of *Satyapīr* (the True saint). It was probably due to this feeling of friendliness that conversion of the Muslims into the Hindu fold, and reconversion of the Hindus to their original faith, could be possible during this period and later on. It was out of the desire for mutual understanding that Hindu (Sanskrit) religious literature was studied and translated or summarised in the Muslim courts like those of Zain-ul-'Ābidīn in Kāshmīr and Husain Shāh in Bengal. Further, Muslim courts and Muslim preachers and saints were attracted to the study of Hindu philosophy like Yoga and Vedānta and the sciences of medicine and astrology. The Hindu astronomers similarly borrowed from the Muslims technical terms, the Muslim calculations of latitudes and longitudes, some items of the calendar (*Zich*) and a branch of horoscopy called *Tājik*, and in medicine the knowledge of metallic acids and some processes in iatro-chemistry. The growth of Urdu, of the mingling "out of Persian, Arabic, and Turkish words and ideas with languages and concepts of Sanskritic origin, is a proof of the linguistic synthesis of the Hindus and the Muslims". Some Muslims wrote in vernaculars

on topics of Hindu life and tradition, as Mâlik Muhammad Jayasī did on Padminī; and Hindu writers wrote in the Persian language on Muslim literary traditions, as Rāi Bhana Mal did in his chronicles. Numerous Muslim poets wrote in Hindī and Hindu poets in Urdu. Amīr Khusrav is known to have been the author of some Hindī works. This assimilation between the two cultures led also to the springing up of new styles of art, architecture and music, "in which the basic element remained the old Hindu, but the finish and outward form became Persian and the purpose served was that of Muslim courts". Some Muslims of aristocratic Hindu origin, or living in a Hindu environment, assimilated the Hindu customs of *Satī* and *Jauhar*. Several intermarriages between the ruling members of the two communities helped this rapprochement and some again were the result of it. These inter-communal marriages, though sometimes tainted with compulsion as a condition of conquest, did much "to soften the acrimonious differences" between the two communities and assist the transplanting of the customs of the one to the fold of the other.

The spirit of harmony and co-operation was not absent in the political field also. Besides retaining, out of necessity, the existing machinery of local administration, the Hindu headmen and accountants of the villages, the Muslim State employed a large number of Hindus, who became prominent in different branches of administration. Thus Medinī Rāi of Chanderī and his friends held high positions in Mālwa; in Bengal, Husain Shāh employed Hindu officers, most prominent amongst whom were Purandar Khān, Rup and Sanātan; the Sultāns of Golkundā employed some Hindus as ministers; Yūsuf 'Ādil Shāh of Bijāpur entrusted the Hindus with offices of responsibility and the records of his State were ordinarily kept in the Marāthī language. Sultān Zain-'ul-'Ābidīn of Kāshmīr anticipated Akbar in his pro-Hindu and liberal policy. The Muslim subjects of Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh of Bijāpur described him as "*Jagadguru*" for his patronage of the Hindus in his State. Examples of Rājput chivalry towards the Muslims are not rare. Thus the Rājput hero, Rānā Sanga, was chivalrous enough to respect the independence of his vanquished foe, Mahmūd II of Mālwa; Qutlugh Khān after being defeated by Sultān Nāsir-ud-dīn took refuge with Rānā Ban Pal of Santur; and it is well known how Hamīr Deva of Ranthambhor gave shelter to a rebel chief of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī at the risk of incurring the Sultān's wrath. Even the Vijayanagar Emperors employed Muslims in their military service from the time of Deva Rāya II, and patronised "the cause of Islam in and outside their great

capital". A famous Muslim general, Asad Khān of Bijāpur, was once invited to Vijayanagar to witness the Mahānavamī festival. Rānā Sanga had a contingent of Muslim troops under him in his war with Bābur, and Hīmū, a Hindu Beniā, who rose to be the chief minister of 'Ādil Shāh Sūr, was the commander and leader of the Afghān troops in their last important fight with the Mughuls in A.D. 1556. These official appointments might have been due more to political necessity than to any feeling of goodwill. But there can be no doubt that they facilitated the growth of amity between the Hindus and Muslims. In fact, in different aspects of life—arts and crafts, music and painting, in the styles of buildings, in dress and costume, in games and sports—this assimilation between the two communities had progressed so much that when Bābur came to India he was compelled to notice their peculiar "Hindustānī way". Sir John Marshall has very aptly remarked that "seldom in the history of mankind has the spectacle been witnessed of two civilisations, so vast and so strongly developed, yet so radically dissimilar as the Muhammadan and Hindu, meeting and mingling together. The very contrasts which existed between them, the wide divergences in their culture and their religions, make the history of their impact peculiarly instructive. . . ."

Hinduism could not completely absorb Islam but was in turn influenced by it in two ways. On the one hand, the proselytising zeal of Islam strengthened conservatism in the orthodox circles of the Hindus, who, with a view to fortifying their position against the spread of the Islamic faith, increased the stringency of the caste rules and formulated a number of rules in the *Smriti* works. The most famous writers of this class were Mādhava of Vijayanagar, whose commentary on a *Parāsara Smriti* work entitled *Kālanirnaya* was written between A.D. 1335–1360; Viśveśvara, author of *Madanapārijāta*, a *Smriti* work written for King Madanapāla (A.D. 1360–1370); the famous commentator of Manu, Kulluka, a Bengali author belonging to the Benares school by domicile; and Raghunandan of Bengal, a contemporary of Chaitanya. On the other hand, some of the democratic principles of Islam made their way into the social and religious systems of the Hindus, and led to the rise of liberal movements under some saintly preachers. With some differences in details, all these reformers were exponents of the liberal *Bhakti* cult, the message of which they sought to carry before the unlettered masses. They preached the fundamental equality of all religions and the unity of Godhead, held that the dignity of man depended on his actions and not on his birth, protested against excessive ritualism and formalities of religion and

domination of the priests, and emphasised simple devotion and faith as the means of salvation for one and all.

Among them, Rāmānanda occupies the first place in point of time, though it should be noted that there are differences of opinion regarding the dates of his birth and death. Born at Allahābād in a Kānyakubja Brāhmaṇa family, Rāmānanda travelled through the holy places of Northern India. He was a worshipper of Rāma and preached the doctrine of *Bhakṭi* in Hindī, to members of all classes and both sexes. Thus, of his twelve principal disciples,[1] one was a barber, another a cobbler and the third a Muhammadan weaver.

Another famous Vaishṇava saint was Vallabhāchārya, an exponent of the Kṛishṇa cult. He was born near Benares in A.D. 1479 of a Telugu Brāhmaṇa family, when the latter had come there on pilgrimage. He showed signs of genius in his early life. After finishing his education he went to the court of Kṛishṇadeva Rāya of Vijayanagar, where he defeated some Saiva *paṇdits* in a public discussion. He advocated renunciation of the world and "insisted on the complete identity of both soul and world with the Supreme spirit". His monism was known as *Suddha-advaita* or "Pure Non-Duality". But abuses later on appeared among the followers of Vallabhāchārya, and, as Monier-Williams writes, "Vallabhāchāryaism became in its degenerate form the Epicureanism of the East".

The greatest and most popular of the Vaishṇava saints was Chaitanya (1485–1533). Born in a learned Brāhmaṇa family of Nadiā in Bengal in A.D. 1485, Chaitanya displayed a wonderful literary acumen in his early life and his soul soon aspired to rise above the fetters of this world. He renounced it at the age of twenty four and spent the rest of his life in preaching his message of love and devotion—eighteen years in Orissa, and six years in the Deccan, Brindāvan, Gaur and other places. He is regarded by his followers as an incarnation of Vishṇu. The essence of Chaitanyaism has been thus expressed by Kṛishṇadās Kavirāj, the author of *Chaitanyacharitāmrita*, the famous biography of Chaitanya: "if a creature adores Kṛishṇa and serves his *Guru*, he is released from the meshes of illusion and attains to Kṛishṇa's feet", and "leaving these (i.e. temptations) and the religious systems based on caste, (the true Vaishṇava) helplessly takes refuge with Kṛishṇa". Thus he was opposed to priestly ritualism and preached faith in Hari. He believed that through love and

[1] Anantānanda, Kabīr, Pīpā, Bhavānanda, Sukha, Sursura, Padmāvatī, Narhari, Raidāsa, Dhana, Saina and the wife of Sursura.

devotion, and song and dance, a state of ecstasy could be produced in which the personal presence of God would be realised. His gospel was meant for all, irrespective of caste and creed, and some of his disciples were drawn from the lower strata of Hindu society and from among Muslims. The influence of Chaitanya's teachings on the masses of the people has been wide and profound.

In Mahārāshtra the religion of devotion was preached by Nāmadeva; and among his followers a few were Muslim converts to Hinduism. Nāmadeva, who belonged to a caste of tailors or calico-printers, flourished probably during the first half of the fifteenth century.[1] With his faith in the unity of Godhead, he did not set much store by idol-worship and external observances of religion. He believed that salvation could be attained only through love of God. Thus he said:

"Love for him who filleth my heart shall never be sundered;
Nāma has applied his heart to the true Name.
As the love between a child and his mother,
So is my soul imbued in the God."

Kabīr made the most earnest efforts to foster a spirit of harmony between Hinduism and Islam. His life is shrouded in a good deal of obscurity, and the dates of his birth and death are uncertain.[2] He flourished either towards the close of the fourteenth century or in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. A legend tells us that he was born of a Brāhmaṇa widow, who left him on the side of a tank in Benares, and was then found and brought up by a Muhammadan weaver and his wife. He is represented by tradition to have been a disciple of Rāmānanda. Though, as Dr. Carpenter puts it, "the whole background of Kabīr's thought is Hindu", he was also influenced to a great extent by Sūfī saints and poets with whom he came in contact. Thus he preached a religion of love, which would promote unity amongst all classes and creeds. To him "Hindu and Turk were pots of same clay: Allah and Rāma were but different names". He wrote:

[1] There are differences of opinion about the date of his birth. According to Macauliffe (*The Sikh Religion*, Vol. VI, p. 18) it is A.D. 1270; Dr. Bhandarkar (*Vaishnavism and Saivaism*, p. 89) and Carpenter (*Theism in Medieval India*, p. 452) place him in the fourteenth century. Dr. Farquhar, however, writes that he flourished "from 1400 to 1430 or thereabouts" (*J.R.A.S.*, 1920, p. 186).

[2] For different opinions, *vide* Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Civilisation*, pp. 146–7. According to Macauliffe and Bhandarkar, A.D. 1398, but according to Westcott, Farquhar, Burns and others A.D. 1440 is the date of his birth.

"It is needless to ask of a saint the caste to which he belongs;

. . . . .

The barber has sought God, the washerman and the carpenter—
Even Raidas was a seeker after God.
The Rishi Swapacha was a tanner by caste.
Hindus and Moslems alike have achieved that
End, where remains no mark of distinction."

Kabīr did not believe in the efficacy of ritual, or external formalities, either of Hinduism or of Islam; to him the true means of salvation was *Bhajan* or devotional worship, together with the freedom of the soul from all sham, insincerity, hypocrisy and cruelty.

Thus he proclaimed:

"It is not by fasting and repeating prayers and the creed
That one goeth to heaven;
The inner veil of the temple of Mecca
Is in man's heart, if the truth be known.
Make thy mind thy Kaaba, thy body its enclosing temple,
Conscience its prime teacher;
Sacrifice wrath, doubt, and malice;
Make patience thine utterance of the five prayers.
The Hindus and the Mussalmans have the same Lord."

Another great preacher of the time was Nānak, the founder of Ṣikhism and the reviver of the pure monotheistic doctrine of the Upanishads. He was born in a Khatri family of Talwāndī (modern Nankana), about thirty-five miles to the south-west of the city of Lahore, in A.D. 1469, and spent his whole life in preaching his gospel of universal toleration, based on all that was good in Hinduism and Islam. As a matter of fact, his mission was to put an end to the conflict of religions. Like Kabīr, he preached the unity of Godhead, condemned with vehemence the formalism of both Hinduism and Islam. Thus he wrote:

"Religion consisteth not in mere words;
He who looketh on all men as equal is religious.
Religion consisteth not in wandering to tombs or places of cremation, or sitting in attitudes of contemplation.
Religion consisteth not in wandering in foreign countries, or in bathing at places of pilgrimage.
Abide pure amidst the impurities of the world;
Thus shalt thou find the way to religion."

While advocating a middle path between extreme asceticism and pleasure-seeking, Nānak exhorted his followers to discard hypocrisy, selfishness and falsehood. He proclaimed:

"Make continence thy furnace, resignation thy goldsmith,
Understanding thine anvil, divine knowledge thy tools,
The fear of God thy bellows, austerities thy fire,
Divine love thy crucible, and melt God's name therein.
In such a true mint the Word shall be coined.
This is the practice of those on whom God looked with an eye of favour."

Nānak's religion being a proselytising one, several Muslims were converted to it, and it gathered momentum under his successors.

B. Development of Provincial Literature

Besides producing far-reaching social and religious effects, the reform movements also gave a great impetus to the development of Indian literature in different parts of India. While the orthodox scholars continued to write in Sanskrit, the religious reformers, with their aim of preaching before the uneducated masses, wrote and spoke in a medium which could be easily understood by them. Thus Rāmānanda and Kabīr preached in Hindī and did much to enrich its poetry; and the *dohās* and *sakhīs* of Kabīr, permeated with devotional fervour, are brilliant specimens of Hindī literature. Nāmadeva greatly helped the development of Marāṭhī literature; Mīrā Bāī and some other preachers of the Rādha-Kṛishṇa cult sang in *Brajabhāshā;* Nānak and his disciples encouraged Punjābī and Gurumukhī; and Bengali literature owes a heavy debt to the Vaishṇava teachers. The famous Vaishṇava poet Chandīdās, who was born, probably towards the end of the fourteenth century, in the village of Nānnūr in the Bīrbhūm district of Bengal, is still held in great esteem and his lyrics are known even to the common folk of Bengal. His contemporary, Vidyāpati Thākur, though a native of Mithilā, is regarded as a poet of Bengal and his memory is venerated by the people of this province. The patronage of the princely courts also considerably helped the growth of literature. Vidyāpati was the court poet of a Hindu chief named Śiva Simha. The Muslim rulers of Bengal engaged scholars to translate the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* from Sanskrit into Bengali, which they understood and spoke. Thus Sultān Nusrat Shāh of Gaur had the *Mahābhārata* translated into Bengali. Vidyāpati

says much in praise of this Sultān and also of Sultān Ghiyās-ud-dīn. Krittivās, whose Bengali version of the *Rāmāyaṇa* has been regarded by some as the Bible of Bengal, enjoyed the patronage of a "King of Gaur". Mālādhar Vasu translated the *Bhāgavata* into Bengali under the patronage of Sultān Husain Shāh and received from him the title of *Gunarāja Khān*. Husain Shāh's general, Parāgal Khān, caused another translation of the *Mahābhārata* to be made by Parameśvara, also known as the Kavindra, and Parāgal Khān's son, Chutī Khān, governor of Chittagong, employed Śrīkara Nandī to translate the *Aśvamedha Parva* of the *Mahābhārata* into Bengali. We have already noted what great encouragement was given to the development of Telugu literature by the Vijayanagar court.

C. *Literary Activity in Sanskrit*

The period was not entirely barren of important compositions in Sanskrit, religious as well as secular, though in this respect it suffers in comparison with the preceding two or three centuries. About A.D. 1300 Pārthasārathī Miśra wrote several works on the *Karma Mimānsā*, of which the *Śāstra Dīpikā* was studied most widely. Some works which expounded the doctrines of the Yoga, Vaiśeshika, and Nyāya systems of philosophy were produced during this period. The more important dramas of the time were *Hammīr-mada-mardana* by Jay Singh Surī (A.D. 1219–1229), *Pradyumna-abhyudaya* by the Kerala prince Ravivarman, *Pratāp Rudra Kalyān* by Vidyānāth (A.D. 1300), *Pārvatī Parinaya* by Vāmana Bhatta Bāna (A.D. 1400), *Gangādāsa Pratāpa Vilāsa*, celebrating the fight of a prince of Chāmpāner against Muhammad II of Gujarāt, by Gangādhar, and the *Vidagdha Mādhava* and the *Lalita Mādhava*, written about A.D. 1532 by Rupa Goswamī, minister of Husain Shāh of Bengal, and author of no less than twenty-five works in Sanskrit. *Smriti* and grammatical literature flourished during this period in Mithilā and Bengal, the most famous writers being Padmanābha Datta, Vidyāpati Upādhyāya and Vāchaspati of Mithilā and Raghunandan of Bengal. It was also marked by the production of a mass of Jaina literature, secular as well as religious. The Vijayanagar rulers extended considerable patronage to scholars like Sāyana, his brother, Mādhava Vidyāranya, and others, and there was consequently a wide Sanskrit culture. We find instances of Muslim scholars possessing a knowledge of Sanskrit.

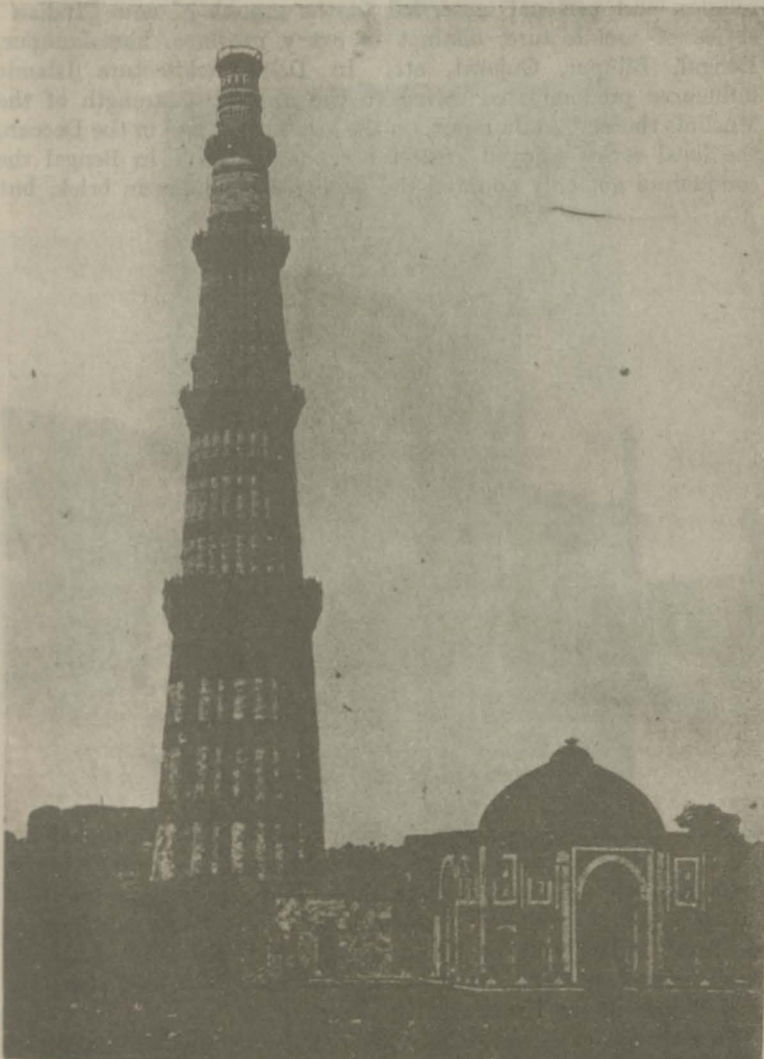
D. Persian Literature and Muslim Education

The Sultāns and Amīrs of Delhi, and the Muslim rulers and nobles in the provinces, naturally encouraged literary activities in Persian, which they appreciated better. Amīr Khusrav declared with pride that Delhi developed into an intellectual competitor of Bukhārā, the famous university-city of Central Asia. The then Muslim rulers of India extended patronage to the Persian scholars who flocked to their courts from other parts of Asia under the pressure of Mongol inroads; established institutions for Muslim learning at Delhi, Jullundur, Fīrūzābād and other places; founded libraries, the most important one being the Imperial Library at Delhi, of which Amīr Khusrav was appointed the librarian by Jalāl-ud-dīn Khaljī; and also helped the growth of Muslim literary societies. The most famous of the Indian scholars who wrote in Persian during this period was Amīr Khusrav He was a prolific writer, whose genius unfolded itself in poetry, prose and music, and whom destiny granted a long tenure of life. He first rose to fame during the reign of Balban and was the tutor of Prince Muhammad, the eldest son of the Sultān. Subsequently he became the court-poet of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, also enjoyed the patronage of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq, and died in A.D. 1324–1325. Another poet of the time, whose fame was recognised outside India, was Shaikh Najm-ud-dīn Hasan, popularly known as Hasan-i-Dihlavī. The first Khaljī ruler did not forget to patronise learning, and his successor, 'Alā-ud-dīn, also seems to have been an enthusiastic friend of it. We are told by Barnī that "the most wonderful thing which people saw in 'Alā-ud-dīn's reign was the multitude of great men of all nationalities, masters of every science and experts in every art. The capital of Delhi, by the presence of these unrivalled men of great talents, had become the envy of Baghdād, the rival of Cairo, and the equal of Constantinople". The pious and learned scholar Nizām-ud-dīn Auliyā and several other scholars flourished during this reign. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq, too, encouraged learned men; and, in spite of his fanciful projects, Muhammad bin Tughluq, himself a man of accomplishments, freely patronised poets, logicians, philosophers and physicians, and held discussion with them in his court. The most notable of the literary men of his time was Maulāna Muaiyyan-ud-dīn Umrānī, who wrote commentaries on the *Husaini*, *Talkhis*, and *Miftāh*. Fīrūz Shāh, himself the author of *Fatuhāt-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, showed great zeal for the cause of education and established several colleges with mosques attached to them.

Among the learned men of his time, the most eminent were Qāzi 'Abdul Muqtadir Shānihi, Maulāna Khwājagi, and Ahmad Thānesvarī. Among the Lodīs, Sultān Sikandar was himself a poet, and gave considerable encouragement to learning. Most of the rulers of the Bahmanī kingdom and other independent Muslim dynasties, like those of Bijāpur, Ahmadnagar, Golkundā, Mālwa, Jaunpur, Bengal, and even Multān, were also patrons of letters. The Muslim writers showed their skill in a branch of study which had been comparatively neglected by the Hindus. They wrote several first-rate historical books in elegant prose. Thus we have Minhāj-ud-dīn's *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī*, which is a general history of the Islamic world and was named after one of his patrons, Sultān Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd. Amīr Khusrav's historical *mesnevis* are full of valuable information, and his *Ta'rīkh-i-'Alāi* especially "contains an interesting account of the first few years of the reign of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī". The most famous historian of the period was Ziā-ud-dīn Barnī, a contemporary of Muhammad bin Tughluq and Fīrūz Shāh. Two other important historical works of the time are the *Ta'rīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī* of Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf, written during the reign of Fīrūz Shāh, and the *Ta'rīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī* of Yahiyā bin Ahmad Sarhindi, which was written about eighty years after the death of Muhammad bin Tughluq and was largely used by later writers.

E. Art and Architecture

It is inaccurate to describe the architecture of the period as "Indo-Saracenic" or "Pathān", as some scholars like Fergusson and others have done. Nor can it be regarded as entirely Indian in "soul and body", as Havell would ask us to believe. In fact, it represented a blending of Indian and Islamic styles, as did certain other aspects of the culture of the time. Sir John Marshall observed that "Indo-Islamic art is not merely a local variety of Islamic art", nor is it merely "a modified form of Hindu art. . . . Broadly speaking, Indo-Islamic architecture derives its character from both sources, though not always in an equal degree". There is no doubt that there existed in India certain Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist and Jaina styles, while Islamic influences were slowly entering into this land from the middle of the seventh century A.D. At the same time, we should note that what we generally call Islamic art was not of a homogeneous and single type; but the followers of Islam, like the Arabs, the Persians, or the Turks, brought in their train the art of different parts of



QUTB MINĀR, DELHI

Western and Central Asia, Northern Africa and South-Western Europe. The mingling of these with the different indigenous styles of old Indian art during this period, according to the needs of religion and personal taste, led to the growth of new "Indian" styles of architecture, distinct in every province, like Jaunpur, Bengal, Bijāpur, Gujarāt, etc. In Delhi architecture Islamic influences predominated owing to the numerical strength of the Muslims there. "At Jaunpur, on the other hand, and in the Deccan, the local styles enjoyed greater ascendancy, while in Bengal the conquerors not only adopted the fashion of building in brick, but

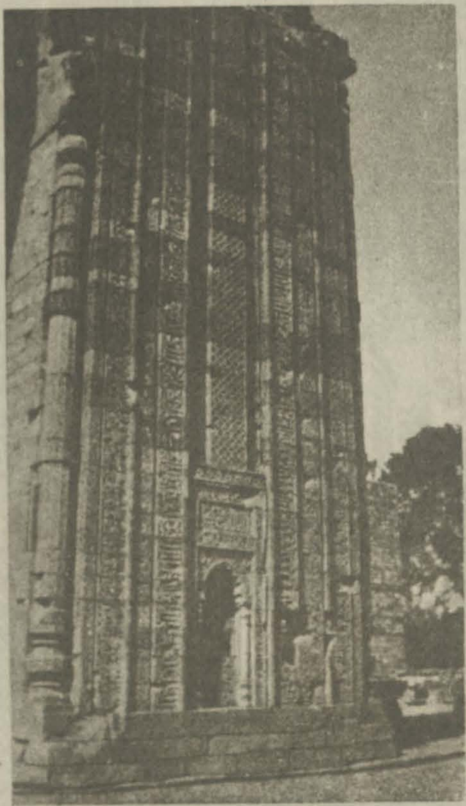


ARCHED SCREEN OF QUTB-UD-DĪN AIBAK ON THE QUWWAT-UL-ISLAM MASJID, DELHI

adorned their structures with chiselled and moulded enrichments frankly imitated from Hindu prototypes. So, too, in Western India they appropriated to themselves almost *en bloc* the beautiful Gujarātī style, which has yielded some of the finest buildings of medieval India; and in Kāshmīr they did the same with the striking wooden architecture which must have been long prevalent in that part of the Himālayas."

This amalgamation of exotic and indigenous architectural styles was possible owing to certain factors. The Muslims had of necessity to employ Indian craftsmen and sculptors, who were naturally guided in their work by the existing art traditions of their country. Further, in the earlier period of Muslim invasions, mosques were

constructed out of the materials of Hindu and Jaina temples, and sometimes the temples themselves were only modified to some extent to suit the requirements of the conquerors. Again, in spite of some striking contrasts between the Indian and Islamic styles, there were two points of resemblance between them which

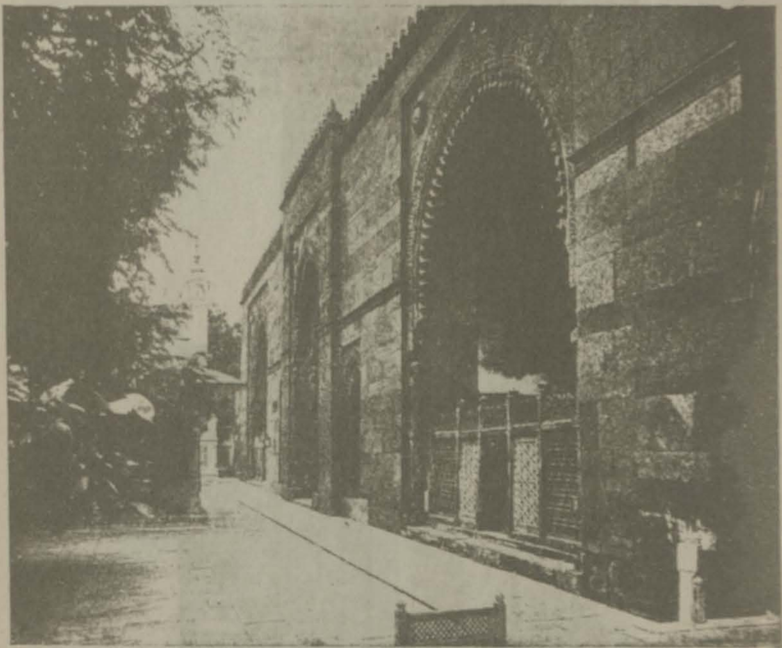


QUWWAT-UL-ISLAM MASJID, DELHI
(Carvings on screen extension)

favoured their fusion. One characteristic feature of many Hindu temples, as well as of Muslim mosques, was "the open court encompassed by chambers or colonnades, and such temples as were built on this plan naturally lent themselves to conversion into mosques and would be the first to be adapted for that purpose by the conquerors. Again, a fundamental characteristic that supplied a common link between the two styles was the fact that

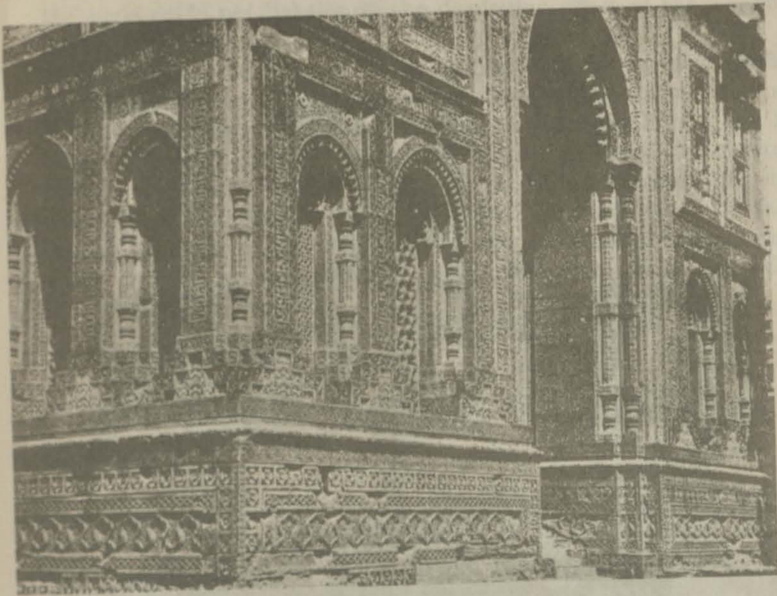
both Islamic and Hindu art were inherently decorative. Ornament was as vital to the one as to the other; both were dependent on it for their very being".

The best specimens of the Delhi style are offered by the Qutb group of mosques, the most famous of which is the Qutb Minār, marked by free-standing towers, calligraphic inscriptions and stalactite corbelling beneath the balconies. The two principal monuments of 'Alā-ud-dīn's reign—the *Jamā'at Khāna Masjid*

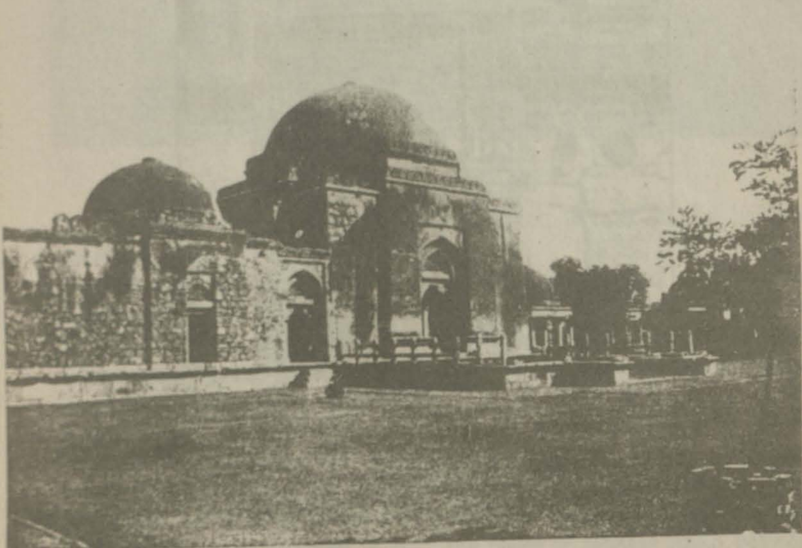


MASJID AT THE DARGĀH OF NIZĀM-UD-DĪN AULIYĀ

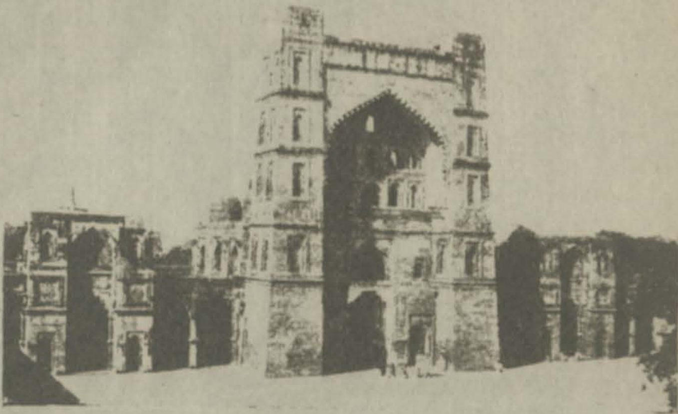
at the *Dargāh* of Nizām-ud-dīn Auliyā and the *'Alāī Darwāza* at the Qutb Minār—show the growing preponderance of Muslim ideas over those of the Hindu architects. The architecture of the Tughluq period lost the splendour, luxuriance and variety which characterised that of the Slave and Khaljī regimes; it became prosaic, simple, austere and formal. This was due to the religious ideas of the Tughluqs and to the comparatively poor condition of the State finances during their rule. Under the Sayyids and the Lodīs, attempts were made to revive the animated style of the Khaljī period. But these succeeded only to a limited extent, and



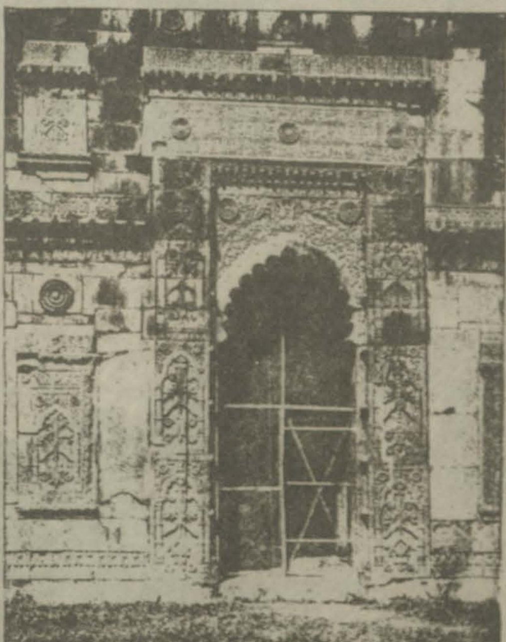
ALĀĪ DARWĀZA AT THE QUTB MINĀR, DELHI



TOMB OF FĪRŪZ SHĀH, SON OF RAJAB, DELHI



ATĀLA DEVĪ MASJID, JAUNPUR



CHHOTĀ SONĀ MASJID, GAUR

the style could not "shake off the deadening effect of the Tughluq period".

Between A.D. 1400 and 1478, during the reigns of Ibrāhīm, Mahmūd and Husain Sharqī, a new style of architecture developed in Jaunpur, which shows the indubitable influence of Hindu art. Its massive sloping walls, square pillars, smaller galleries and cloisters are clearly Hindu features, designed by Hindu masons; and the mosques of Jaunpur have no minarets of the usual type. In fact, many of the new buildings of Jaunpur were built out of the materials of old temples for a new purpose. The *Atāla Devī Masjid*, founded



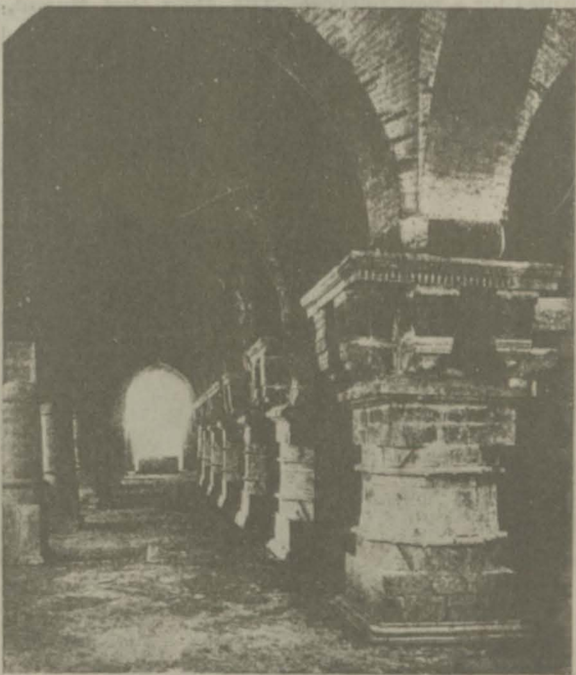
BARĀ SONĀ MASJID, GAUR

in A.D. 1377, but completed in A.D. 1408, is one of the brilliant specimens of the Jaunpur style.

In Bengal also there grew up a mixed style of architecture, characterised by the use of bricks in the main, "the subsidiary use of stone, the use of pointed arches on short pillars, and the Muslim adaptation of the traditional Hindu temple style of curvilinear cornices copied from bamboo structures, and of beautifully carved Hindu symbolic decorative designs like the Lotus". The *Ādīna Masjid* at Pāndua of 400 domes, built by Sikandar in A.D. 1368, is renowned for its magnitude and beauty. The other famous mosques of this province are the *Chhotā Sonā Masjid* (Smaller Golden Mosque), built by Walī Muhammad during the reign of Husain Shāh between

A.D. 1493–1519; the *Barā Sonā Masjid* (Greater Golden Mosque), completed by Nusrat Shāh at Gaur in 1526; and the *Qadam Rasūl*, built by the same Sultān in A.D. 1530.

The province of Gujarāt also witnessed the growth of a beautiful style of architecture. A splendid indigenous style had already flourished there before the coming of the Muslims, and the buildings of the conquerors bear unmistakable signs of the influence of that style, though arches were occasionally used for symbolical



ĀDĪNA MASJID, PĀNDUA

purposes. Thus we find the use of fine wood-carving and also of delicate stone lattices and ornaments in the buildings of the new capital city, Ahmadābād, which was constructed by Ahmad Shāh, during A.D. 1411–1441, out of the ruins of old temples and buildings. The *Jāmi' Masjid*, the construction of which was begun in A.D. 1411, has 260 pillars supporting 15 stone domes, made of horizontally projecting courses in the indigenous style. Dr. Burgess, who has dealt exhaustively with the history and features of ancient

and medieval architecture in his five volumes of the Archaeological Survey of Western India, justly describes this style as "combining all the beauty and finish of the native art with a certain magnificence which is deficient in their own works". In the numerous buildings, mosques and tombs, built in Gujarāt since the accession of the Ahmad Shāhī rulers, the tradition of the old Indian art was predominant, though it was modified in certain respects according to the requirements of the followers of Islam.

At Dhār, the old capital of the kingdom of Mālwa, two mosques



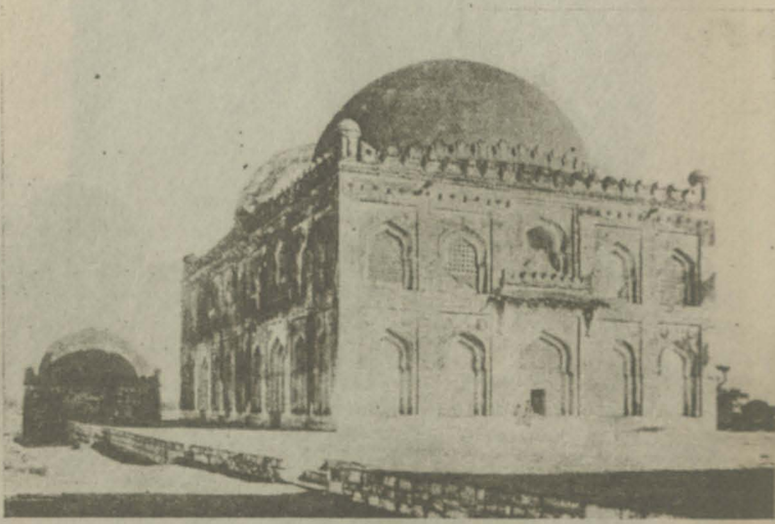
TOMB OF HŪSHANG SHĀH

were built wholly out of the remains of old buildings; the domes and pillars of these mosques were of Hindu form. But the buildings at Māndū, where the capital was soon transferred, were marked by the predominance of Muslim art traditions, as those of Delhi; "the borrowing or imitating" of native forms "seems to have been suppressed and the buildings clung steadily to the pointed arch style". Among the many buildings of splendid architectural beauty built in the fortified city of Māndū, situated in an extensive plateau over-looking the Narmadā, the following deserve mention—the *Jāmi' Masjid*, which was planned and begun by

Hūshang and completed by Mahmūd Khaljī, the ***Hindolā Mahal***, the *Jahāj Mahal*, Hūshang's tomb, and Bāz Bahādur's and Rupamatī's palaces. Marble and sandstone were used in many of these edifices.

The Muslim Sultāns of Kāshmīr continued the old tradition of stone and wooden architecture but grafted on it "structural forms and decorative motifs peculiarly associated with Islam". Thus here also we find a blending of Hindu and Muslim ideas of art.

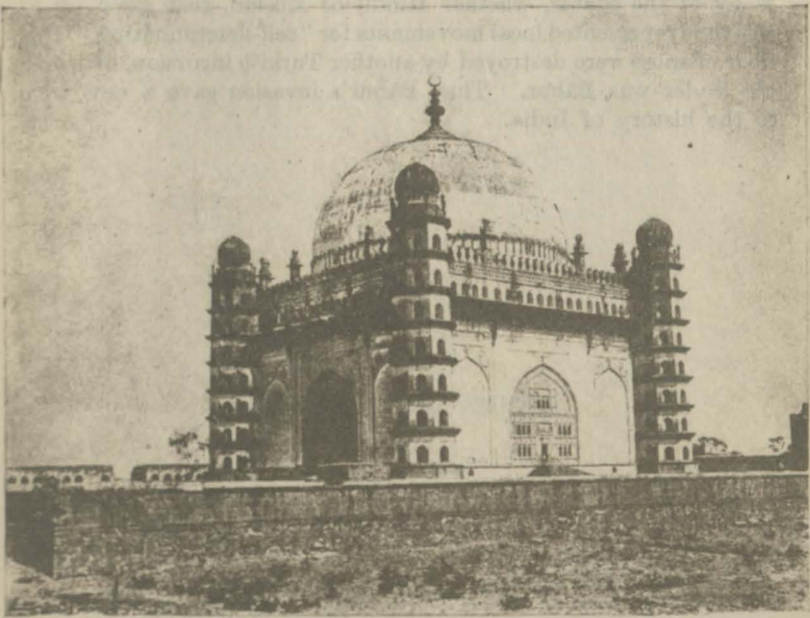
In South India the architecture of the Bahmanīds, who were patrons of art, letters and sciences, was a composite mixture of



TOMB OF FĪRŪZ SHĀH BAHMANĪ, GULBARGA

several elements—Indian, Turkish, Egyptian and Persian—the last of which was well-marked in some of the buildings like the *Jāmi' Masjid* at Gulbarga, the *Chānd Minār* at Daulatābād (1435) and the College of Mahmūd Gāwān at Bīdar (1472). Many of the Bahmanī buildings were built on the sites of the old temples and out of their materials, and thus the influence of old Hindu art could not be avoided. Turkish and Egyptian elements entered through West Asiatic and African adventurers, who got employment in the Bahmanī kingdom; and the Persian element through the Persians, who poured into that kingdom in the latter half of the fifteenth century. The native Deccan art, however, began

to reassert itself in growing vigour from the end of the fifteenth century. As the monuments which the 'Ādil Shāhīs of Bijāpur built in the next century were constructed by Indian artists and craftsmen, "it was inevitable", writes Sir John Marshall, "that Indian genius should rise superior to foreign influence and stamp itself more and more deeply on these creations". We have already discussed the splendid outburst of art and architecture in the Vijayanagar Empire.



TOMB OF MUHAMMAD 'ĀDIL SHĀH, BIJĀPUR

Thus we find that, in spite of some bitterness in political relations, the impact of Hindu and Islamic civilisations was producing harmony and mutual understanding in the spheres of society, culture and art, during the Turko-Afghān period. This harmony developed in the time of the great Mughul, Akbar, to an unprecedented degree and was not wholly lost even in the time of his successors and also of the later Mughuls.

The preachings of the saintly teachers of India with their ideal of uplift of the masses, the tolerant ideas of the Sūfī saints and scholars, and the growth of Indian provincial literature, might be regarded

as signs of modernism appearing as a result of the fusion of two civilisations, while the medieval Sultānate was hastening towards disintegration. Another noticeable feature of Indian history on the eve of Bābur's invasion was the rise or growth of indigenous states, like Vijayanagar, Orissa and Mewār, as a sort of protest against foreign domination. We should also note that the rulers of the independent Muslim kingdoms that arose on the ruins of the medieval Muslim Empire cannot all be regarded as aliens; the rulers of Gujarāt, Ahmadnagar and Berar were of indigenous origin. Many of the States, whether Hindu or Muslim, that grew up at this time represented local movements for "self-determination". But their chances were destroyed by another Turkish incursion, of which the leader was Bābur. Thus Bābur's invasion gave a new turn to the history of India.

PART II

Book II

THE MUGHUL EMPIRE

CHAPTER I

MUGHUL-AFGHĀN CONTEST FOR SUPREMACY IN INDIA, A.D. 1526–1556

I. Bābur

THE history of India from A.D. 1526 to 1556 is mainly the story of the Mughul-Afghān contest for supremacy in this land. The previous Mughul (Mongol) inroads into India did not produce any tangible result except that they added, through the settlement of the "New Mussalmāns", a new element to the Indian population and at times harassed the Turko-Afghān Sultāns. But the invasion of Tīmūr, who occupied a province of the Empire, the Punjab, accelerated the fall of the decadent Sultānate. One of his descendants, Bābur, was destined to attempt a systematic conquest of Northern India and thus to lay here the foundation of a new Turkish dominion,[1] which being lost in the time of his son and successor, Humāyūn, in the face of an Afghān revival, was restored by the year 1556 and was gradually extended by Akbar. In fact, there were three phases in the history of the Mughul conquest of India. The first phase (1526–1530) was occupied with the subjugation of the Afghāns and the Rājputs under Rānā Sanga. The second phase (1530–1540) commenced with the reign of Humāyūn, who made unsuccessful attempts to subjugate Mālwa, Gujarāt and Bengal, but was expelled from India by Sher Shāh, which meant the revival of the Afghān power. The third phase (1545–1556) was marked by the restoration of the Mughul dominion by Humāyūn and its consolidation by Akbar.

Bābur, a Chaghātai Turk, was descended on his father's side from Tīmūr, and was connected on his mother's side with Chingīz Khān.

[1] The so-called Mughuls really belonged to a branch of the Turks named after Chaghātai, the second son of Chingīz Khān, the famous Mongol leader, who came to possess Central Asia and Turkestān, the land of the Turks. The establishment of the Mughul dominion in India can very well be regarded as "an event in Islamic and world history" in the sense that it meant a fresh triumph for Islam in India, at a time when its followers were gaining success in other parts of the world. Constantinople had been captured by the Turks in A.D. 1453, Sulaimān the Magnificent (1520–1566) extended the authority of the Turkish Empire over South-eastern Europe; and in Persia, Isma'īl Safavī (1500–1524) laid the foundation of the famous Safavī Empire.

In 1494 he inherited from his father, at the age of eleven, the small principality of Farghāna, now a province of Chinese Turkestān. But his early life was full of difficulties, which, however, proved to be a blessing in disguise by training him adequately to fight with the vicissitudes of fortune. He cherished the desire of recovering the throne of Tīmūr, but was thwarted by his kinsmen and near relatives at Farghāna and the rivalry of the Uzbeg chief Shaibānī Khān. His two attempts to take possession of the coveted city of Samarqānd in 1497 and 1503 ended in failure. To add to his misfortunes, he was deprived of his own patrimony of Farghāna and had to spend his days as a homeless wanderer for about a year. But even in this period of dire adversity, he formed the bold design of conquering Hindustān like his great ancestor Tīmūr, the story of whose Indian exploits he heard from an old lady of one hundred and eleven, mother of a village headman with whom he had found shelter for some time. Thus taking advantage of a rebellion in another part of the dominions of the Uzbegs, whose rising power had kept off the Tīmūrids from their principalities, Bābur occupied Kābul in A.D. 1504. Being able to secure the help of Shāh Isma'īl Safavī of Persia against Shaibānī Khān, the Uzbeg chief, Bābur tried once again to occupy Samarqānd in October, 1511, but the Uzbegs under Shaibānī's successor finally defeated him in 1512. Bābur's ambitions towards the north-west being thus foiled, he decided to try his luck in the south-east, and led several expeditions in this direction, which were in the nature of reconnaissances, before he got an opportunity to advance into the heart of Hindustān after twelve years.

This opportunity came to Bābur when he was invited to India by a discontented party. It has already been pointed out how India was then distracted by the ambitions, disaffections and rivalries of the nobles, and the Delhi Sultānate existed in nothing but in name. The last nail in its coffin was driven by the ambition and revengeful spirit of some of its nobles. Two of them, Daulat Khān, the most powerful noble of the Punjab, who was discontented with Ibrāhīm Lodī because of the cruel treatment he had meted out to his son, Dilawar Khān, and 'Ālam Khān, an uncle of Ibrāhīm Lodī and a pretender to the throne of Delhi, went to the length of inviting Bābur to invade India. Probably Rānā Sanga had some negotiations with Bābur about this time.

Bābur had for some time been cherishing the ambition of invading Hindustān. His early training in the school of adversity had implanted in him the spirit of adventure. He at once responded to

the invitation, entered the Punjab and occupied Lahore in 1524. But his Indian confederates, Daulat Khān and 'Ālam Khān, soon realised their mistake. When they saw that Bābur had no desire to give up his Indian conquests, they turned against him. This compelled Bābur to retire to Kābul, where he began to collect reinforcements with a view to striking once again.

The blow was not long in coming. He marched from Kābul in November, 1525, occupied the Punjab, and compelled Daulat Khān Lodī to submit. The more difficult task of conquering Delhi, which was certainly within the horizon of Bābur's ambition, was still to be accomplished. So he proceeded against Ibrāhīm Lodī, the nominal ruler of the shrivelled Afghān Empire, and met him on the historic field of Pānīpat on the 21st April, 1526. He had with him a large park of artillery and an army of 12,000 men, while the numerical strength of the troops of Ibrāhīm was vastly superior, being 100,000 according to Bābur's estimate. But Bābur had the strength of character and experience of a veteran general, while his enemy, as we are told by Bābur himself, "was an inexperienced man, careless in his movements, who marched without order, halted or retired without method and engaged without foresight". Thus by superior strategy and generalship and the use of artillery[1] Bābur won a decisive victory over the Lodī Sultān, who, after a desperate resistance, fell on the field of battle with the flower of his army. "By the grace and mercy of Almighty God," Bābur wrote, "this difficult affair was made easy to me, and that mighty army, in the space of half a day, was laid in the dust." Bābur quickly occupied Delhi and Āgra.

But the Mughul conquest of Hindustān was not an accomplished fact as a result of Bābur's victory over Ibrāhīm. It did not give him the virtual sovereignty over the country, because there were other strong powers like the Afghān military chiefs, and the Rājputs under Rānā Sanga, who also then aspired after political supremacy and were thus sure to oppose him. As a modern writer has aptly remarked, "the magnitude of Bābur's task could be properly realised when we say that it actually began with Pānīpat. Pānīpat set his foot on the path of empire-building, and in this path the first great obstacle was the opposition of the Afghān tribes" under a number of military chiefs, each one of whom exercised almost undisputed power within his domains or *jāgīrs*. Nevertheless, the battle of Pānīpat has its own significance in the sense that it marked the foundation of Mughul dominion in India

[1] We have already pointed out that this was not the first occasion when artillery was used in India.

Shortly after occupying the Doāb, Bābur suppressed the Afghān nobles in the north, south and east of it. He sent his own nobles to the unconquered parts of the country to expel the Afghān chiefs therefrom, while he engaged himself at Āgra in organising his resources with a view to meeting the brave Rājput chief, Rānā Sanga, a collision with whom was inevitable. As a matter of fact, it took place almost before the task of subduing the Afghān nobles had been completed. Rānā Sanga, a veteran and intrepid warrior, marched to Bayāna, where he was joined by Hasan Khān Mewāti and some other Muslim supporters of the Lodī dynasty. Thus the Rājputs and some of the Indian Muslims allied themselves together with the determination to prevent the imposition of another foreign yoke on India. But all the Afghān chiefs could not combine with the Rājputs at this critical moment, and thus Bābur's task became comparatively easy. The course of Indian history might have taken a different turn if he had had to encounter the united strength of the Hindus and all the Muslims of India.

Rānā Sanga, the hero of Rājput national revival, was certainly a more formidable adversary than Ibrāhīm. He marched with an army, composed of 120 chiefs, 800,000 horse and 500 war elephants, and the rulers of Mārwār, Amber, Gwālior, Ajmer, and Chanderī, and Sultān Mahmūd Lodī (another son of Sultān Sikandar Lodī), whom Rānā Sanga had acknowledged as the ruler of Delhi, joined him. Moreover, the Rājputs, being "energetic, chivalrous, fond of battle and bloodshed, animated by a strong national spirit, were ready to meet face to face the boldest veterans of the camp, and were at all times prepared to lay down their life for their honour". Bābur's small army was struck with terror and panic, and he himself also fully realised the magnitude of his task. But he possessed an indomitable spirit, and without being unnerved tried to infuse fresh courage and enthusiasm into the hearts of his dismayed soldiers. He broke his drinking cups, poured out all the liquor that he had with him on the ground, vowed not to take strong drink any longer, and appealed to his men in a stirring speech.

This produced the desired effect, and all his soldiers swore on the Holy Quran to fight for him. The Mughuls and the Indians met in a decisive contest at Khānua or Kānwā, a village almost due west of Āgra, on the 16th March, 1527. The Rājputs fought with desperate valour, but Bābur, by using similar tactics as at Pānīpat, triumphed over them. The defeat of the Rājputs was complete. The Rānā escaped with the help of some of his followers, but died broken-hearted after about two years. Bābur followed

up his success at Khānua by crossing the Jumnā and storming the fortress of Chanderī, in spite of the gallant opposition of the Rājputs.

The battle of Khānua is certainly one of the decisive battles of Indian history. In a sense, its results were more significant than those of the first battle of Pānīpat. The battle of Pānīpat marked the defeat of the titular Sultān of Delhi, who had in fact ceased to command sovereign authority, while that of Khānua resulted in the defeat of the powerful Rājput confederacy. The latter thus destroyed the chance of political revival of the Rājputs, for which they had made a bid on the decay of the Turko-Afghān Sultānate. It is, of course, far from the truth to say that the Rājputs "ceased henceforth to be a dominant factor in the politics of Hindustān". In fact, their retirement from the field of politics was only temporary. They revived once again after about thirty years and exercised profound influence on the history of the Mughul Empire. Even Sher Shāh had to reckon with Rājput hostility. But the temporary eclipse of the Rājputs after Khānua facilitated Bābur's task in India and made possible the foundation of a new foreign rule. Rushbrook Williams is right when he says that before the battle of Khānua, "the occupation of Hindustān might have been looked upon as a mere episode in Bābur's career of adventure; but from henceforth it becomes the keynote of his activities for the remainder of his life. His days of wandering in search of a fortune are now over; the fortune is his and he has but to show himself worthy of it. And it is significant of the new stage in his career, which this battle marks, that never afterwards does he have to stake his throne and life upon the issue of a stricken field. Fighting there is and fighting in plenty to be done; but it is fighting for the extension of his power, for the reduction of rebels, for the ordering of his kingdom. It is never fighting for his throne. And it is also significant of Bābur's grasp of vital issues that from henceforth the centre of gravity of his power is shifted from Kābul to Hindustān".

We have already noted how Bābur hurried to meet the Rājputs by leaving the task of thorough subjugation of the Afghān chiefs incomplete. But he could now turn his undivided attention to it. He met the allied Afghāns of Bihār and Bengal on the banks of the Gogrā, near the junction of that river with the Ganges above Patna, and inflicted a crushing defeat on them on the 6th May, 1529. Thus, as a result of three battles, a considerable portion of Northern India was reduced to submission by Bābur, who became the master of a kingdom extending from the Oxus to the

Gogrā and from the Himālayas to Gwālior, though there remained certain gaps to be filled in here and there.

But Bābur was not destined to enjoy for long the fruits of his hard-won victories. He died at Āgra at the age of forty-seven or forty-eight, on the 26th December, 1530. The Muslim historians relate a romantic anecdote regarding his death. It is said that when his son, Humāyūn, fell ill, Bābur, by a fervent prayer to God, had his son's disease transferred to his own body, and thus while the son began to recover, the father's health gradually declined till he ultimately succumbed, two or three months after Humāyūn's recovery. A modern writer argues that Bābur's death was due to the attack of a disease and that "there is no reason to believe the fantasy told by 'Abul Fazl that Bābur died as the result of the sacrifice he performed for his son".[1] Bābur's body was first laid at Ārāmbāgh in Āgra, but was afterwards conveyed to Kābul, where it was buried in one of his favourite gardens.[2]

During the four years that Bābur spent in Hindustān, the Punjab, the territory covered by the modern United Provinces, and North Bihār, were conquered by him, and the leading Rājput state of Mewār also submitted to him. But he could effect nothing more than conquests, which alone do not suffice to stabilise an Empire, unless the work of administrative consolidation goes hand in hand with, or immediately follows, them. Thus, as a modern writer has remarked, "what he had left undone was of greater importance" than what he had done. Though his military conquests gave him an extensive dominion, "there was", writes Erskine, "little uniformity in the political situation of the different parts of this vast empire. Hardly any law could be regarded as universal but that of the unrestrained power of the prince. Each kingdom, each province, each district, and (we may almost say) every village, was governed, in ordinary matters, by its peculiar customs. . . . There were no regular courts of law spread over the kingdom for the administration of justice. . . . All differences relating to land, where they were not settled by the village officers, were decided by the district authorities, the collectors, the Zamindārs or Jāgīrdārs. The higher officers of government exercised not only civil but also criminal jurisdiction, even in capital cases, with little form or under little restraint". In fact, after his conquests, Bābur had hardly any time to enact new laws,

[1] Srī Rām Sharmā, "Story of Bābur's Death", *Calcutta Review*, September, 1936.

[2] As Bābur himself tells us, he had a special liking for Kābul. "The climate is extremely delightful," he writes, "and there is no such place in the known world."

or to reorganise the administration, which continued to retain its medieval feudal nature with all its defects. He could not build a sound financial system. He spent much wealth in offering presents and gifts to his followers, and remitted certain duties for the Muslims. Nor could he leave behind him any "remarkable public and philanthropic institutions" to win the goodwill of the governed. Thus, taking these defects of Bābur's work into consideration, it can very well be said that he "bequeathed to his son a monarchy which could be held together only by the continuance of war conditions, which in times of peace was weak, structureless and invertebrate". Nevertheless, he occupies an important place in the history of India, as he was the first architect to lay the foundation stone of the edifice of the Mughul Empire in India, on which the superstructure was raised by his illustrious grandson, Akbar.

Bābur is one of the most romantic and interesting personalities in the history of Asia. A man of indomitable spirit and remarkable military prowess, he was no ruthless conqueror exulting in needless massacres and wanton destruction. An affectionate father, a kind master, a generous friend and a firm believer in God, he was an ardent lover of Nature and truth and "excelled in music and other arts". He probably inherited from his father the restless spirit of adventure and geniality of temperament that he did not lose even in the most troublesome period of his life, and derived his literary tastes from his maternal grandfather. As Lane-Poole observes: "He is the link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and imperial government, between Tīmūr and Akbar. The blood of the two great scourges of Asia, Chingīz and Tīmūr, mixed in his veins, and to the daring and restlessness of the nomad Tārtār he joined the culture and urbanity of the Persian. He brought the energy of the Mongol, the courage and capacity of the Turk, to the subjection of the listless Hindu; and, himself a soldier of fortune and no architect of empire, he yet laid the first stone of the splendid fabric which his grandson Akbar completed. . . . His permanent place in history rests upon his Indian conquests, which opened the way for an imperial line; but his place in biography and in literature is determined rather by his daring adventures and persevering efforts in his earlier days, and by the delightful *Memoirs* in which he related them. Soldier of fortune as he was, Bābur was not the less a man of fine literary taste and fastidious critical perception. In Persian, the language of culture, the Latin of Central Asia, as it is of India, he was an accomplished poet, and in his native Turkī he was master of a

pure and unaffected style alike in prose and verse." His *Memoirs*, which deservedly hold a high place in the history of human literature, were translated into Persian by 'Abdur Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān in the time of Akbar in 1590, into English by Leyden and Erskine in 1826, and into French in 1871. Annette Susannah Beveridge has published a revised English version of these. There is also a small collection of his fine Turkī lyrics.

2. Humāyūn and his Early Wars

Three days after the death of Bābur, Humāyūn ascended the throne of Hindustān at the age of twenty-three. The situation at his accession was not indeed a very easy one. He was confronted with several hostile forces on all sides, disguised and so the more dangerous. There was hardly any unity in the royal family, and his cousins, Muhammad Zamān and Muhammad Sultān, were pretenders to the throne. Moreover, as the law of primogeniture was not strictly enforced among the Mussalmāns, his three brothers, Kāmrān, Hindāl and 'Askarī, also coveted the throne. As Erskine remarks: "The sword was the grand arbiter of right, and every son was prepared to try his fortune against his brothers." His court was also full of nobles who engineered plans for the possession of the throne. Further, the army at his disposal was a mixed body, composed of adventurers of diverse nationalities having conflicting interests. Thus, he could not safely count on the support of his relatives, his court, or his army. Again, Bābur's legacy to Humāyūn was of a precarious nature. The former, as we have already noted, did not leave behind him a consolidated and well-organised Empire. In fact, "he had defeated the armies and broken the power of the reigning dynasty; but the only hold which he, or his race, yet had upon the people of India was military force". The Rājputs had been only temporarily subdued. Though the Afghāns had been defeated, they were far from being permanently crushed. The numerous scattered Afghān nobles, always ripe for revolt, required only a strong and able leader to galvanise them into life, and this they found in Sher Shāh. The growing power of Gujarāt under Bahādur Shāh was also a serious menace to Humāyūn.

A ruler, possessed of military genius, diplomatic skill, and political wisdom, was the need of the hour. But Humāyūn lacked all of these. In fact, he himself proved to be his worst enemy. Though endowed with intellectual tastes and love of culture, he was devoid of the wisdom and discretion, as well as strong

determination and perseverance, of his father. As Lane-Poole observes, "he was incapable of sustained effort and after a moment of triumph would bury himself in his harem and dream away the precious hours in the opium-eater's paradise whilst his enemies were thundering at the gate. Naturally kind, he forgave when he should have punished; light-hearted and sociable, he revelled at the table when he ought to have been in the saddle. His character attracts but never dominates. In private life he might have been a delightful companion and a staunch friend. But as a king he was a failure. His name means 'fortunate', and never was an unlucky sovereign more miscalled".

The first mistake on the part of Humāyūn was that he showed indiscreet clemency, probably under the dying instructions of his father, towards his brothers, who being his jealous rivals should have been kept under effective control. 'Askarī was given the fief of Sambhal; Hindāl that of Alwar; and Kāmrān, the eldest of the three, was not only confirmed in the possession of Kābul and Qandahār but also secured after a military demonstration against Mīr Yunus 'Ālī, Humāyūn's general at Lahore, the Punjab and the district of Hissār Fīrūza, to the east of the Punjab proper. Thus Humāyūn struck at the root of the integrity of Bābur's Empire. Further, the transfer of the Indus region and beyond to Kāmrān deprived Humāyūn of the best recruiting ground for his army, the strength of which was absolutely necessary for the safety of the infant Mughul dominion in India. The possession of Hissār Fīrūza gave Kāmrān the command of the high-road between the Punjab and Delhi.

Fortune, however, favoured Humāyūn in his early wars, before the hostile forces had grown uncontrollable. Five or six months after his accession he marched to besiege the fortress of Kālinjar in Bundelkhand, on the suspicion that its Rājā was in sympathy with the Afghāns. But he had to retire, after levying a certain amount of money from the Rājā, to deal with the Afghān menace in the east. He gained a decisive victory over the Afghāns at Dourah (Dauhrūā) and drove out Sultān Mahmūd Lodī from Jaunpur. He besieged Chunār, then held by the Afghān chief Sher Khān, but soon abandoned it, and without completely suppressing the rising Afghān chief accepted from him "a purely perfunctory submission", and thus allowed him free scope to develop his resources and power, while he had to march to the west to check the growing pretensions of Bahādur Shāh of Gujarāt.

Bahādur Shāh had given definite provocation to Humāyūn. He had openly given shelter and help to many of the Afghān refugees

and foes of the latter. The decline of Mewār had given him the opportunity to extend his territories at its expense, and after annexing Mālwa he besieged the famous Rājput fortress of Chitor, when Humāyūn reached Mālwa towards the end of 1534 without reaping the full advantage of his victory over the Afghāns. Severely harassed by the Gujarātīs, Rānī Karnāvatī of Mewār solicited Humāyūn's assistance against Bahādur Shāh. But the Mughul king paid no heed to this, nor did he, for his own sake, immediately attack Bahādur Shāh, but waited while the latter vanquished the Rājputs and stormed Chitor with the help of the Turkish engineer, Rūmī Khān (of Constantinople), and Portuguese and other European artillerymen. Humāyūn committed a fatal blunder by ignoring the Rājput appeal. Indeed, he lost a golden opportunity of winning for his own cause their sympathy and support, the inestimable worth of which was realised by his son, Akbar. For the present he defeated the troops of Bahādur Shāh in an engagement on the banks of an artificial lake near Mandasor, chased him from Māndū to Champāner and Ahmadābād and thence to Cambay till he was compelled to seek refuge in the island of Diu. But this victory of Humāyūn over the Gujarāt ruler was short-lived. The weakness of his character soon manifested itself here as in other events of his career. In the flush of victory, he, his brother, 'Askarī, and most of his soldiers, plunged into feasting and revelry, as a natural sequel to which "his affairs fell into confusion; and even his own camp became a scene of uproar and insubordination". The Sultān of Gujarāt took advantage of this to recover his lost territories from the Mughuls. Humāyūn could not think of subduing him again, as his attention was drawn towards the east, where the Afghāns had grown immensely powerful. No sooner had he begun his return march than Mālwa was also lost to him. Thus "one year had seen the rapid conquest of the two great provinces; the next saw them quickly lost". The next stage in Humāyūn's career was marked by his ill-fated conflicts with Sher, the champion of Afghān revival.

3. Sher Shāh and the Sūrs : The Afghān Revival and Decline

Bābur's victories at Pānīpat and Gogrā did not result in the complete annihilation of the Afghān chiefs. They were seething with discontent against the newly founded alien rule, and only needed the guidance of one strong personality to coalesce their isolated efforts into an organised national resistance against it. This they got in Sher Khān Sūr, who effected the revival of the

Afghān power and established a glorious, though short, régime in India by ousting the newly established Mughul authority.

The career of Sher Khān Sūr, the hero of Indo-Muslim revival, is as fascinating as that of Bābur and not less instructive than that of the great Mughul, Akbar. Originally bearing the name of Farid, he began his life in a humble way, and, like many other great men in history, had to pass through various trials and vicissitudes of fortune before he rose to prominence by dint of his personal merit. His grandfather, Ibrāhīm, an Afghān of the Sūr tribe, lived near Peshāwār and his father's name was Hasan. Ibrāhīm migrated with his son to the east in quest of military service in the early part of Buhlūl Lodī's reign and both first entered the service of Mahābat Khān Sūr and Dāūd Khān Sāhu Khāil, *jāgīrdārs* of the *paraganās* of Hariana and Bakhala in the Punjab, and settled in the *paraganā* of Bājwara or Bejoura, where probably Farid was born in A.D. 1472.[1] After some time Ibrāhīm got employment under Jamāl Khān Sarang Khānī of Hissār Fīrūza in the Delhi district. Farid was soon taken to Sasarām by his father, Hasan, who had been granted a *jāgīr* there by his master, Umar Khān Sarwānī, entitled Khān-i-A'zam, when the latter got the governorship of Jaunpur. Hasan, like the other nobles of his time, was a polygamist, and Farid's step-mother had predominant influence over him. This made him indifferent to Farid, whereupon the latter left home at the age of twenty-two and went to Jaunpur. Thus the Afghān youth was forced into a life of adventure and struggle, which cast his mind and character in a heroic mould. For some time he devoted himself to study. By indefatigable industry and steady application, Farid early attracted the attention of his teachers at Jaunpur and quickly gained an uncommon acquaintance with the Persian language and literature. He was capable of reproducing from memory the *Gulistān*, *Bustān* and *Sikandar-nāmah*. Being pleased with this promising youth, Jamāl Khān, his father's patron, effected a reconciliation between him and his father, who allowed him to return to Sasarām and to administer the *paraganās* of Sasarām and Khawaspur, both then dependent on Rohtās in Bihār. The successful administration of those two places by Farid served to increase his step-mother's jealousy, and so leaving Sasarām once again he went to Āgra.

On the death of his father, Farid took possession of his paternal *jāgīr* on the strength of a royal *firman*, which he had been able

[1] The old view of Dr. Qanungo that Farid was born at Hissār Fīrūza in A.D. 1486 has been recently pointed out to be wrong by Prof. Paramatma Saran in his paper on "The Date and Place of Sher Shāh's Birth" published in *J.B.O.R.S.*, 1934, pp. 108–22.

to procure at Āgra. In 1522 he got into the service of Bahar Khān Lohānī, the independent ruler of Bihār, whose favour he soon secured by discharging his duties honestly and assiduously. His master conferred on him the title of Sher Khān for his having shown gallantry by killing a tiger single-handed, and also soon rewarded his ability and faithfulness by appointing him his deputy (*Vakil*) and tutor (*Atāliq*) of his minor son, Jalāl Khān.

But perverse destiny again went against Sher. His enemies poisoned his master's mind against him, and he was once more deprived of his father's *jāgīr*. "Impressed by the complete success of Mughul arms" and with the prospect of future gain, he now joined Bābur's camp, where he remained from April, 1527, to June, 1528. In return for the valuable services he rendered to Bābur in his eastern campaigns, the latter restored Sasarām to him.

Sher soon left the Mughul service and came back to Bihār to become again its deputy governor and guardian of his former pupil, Jalāl Khān. While the minor king remained as the nominal ruler of Bihār, Sher became the virtual head of its government. In the course of four years he won over the greater part of the army to his cause and "elevated himself to a state of complete independence". Meanwhile, the fortress of Chunār luckily came into his possession. Tāj Khān, the Lord of Chunār, was killed by his eldest son, who had risen against his father for his infatuation with a younger wife, Lad Mālikā. This widow, however, married Sher Khān and gave him the fortress of Chunār. Humāyūn besieged Chunār in 1531, but Sher Khān had taken no part in the Afghān rising of that year and saved his position by a timely submission to the Mughul invader.

The rapid and unexpected rise of Sher at the expense of the Lohānī Afghāns made the latter, and even Jalāl Khān, impatient of his control. They tried to get rid of this dictator. The attempt, however, failed owing to his "unusual circumspection". They then entered into an alliance (September, 1533) with Mahmūd Shāh, the King of Bengal, who was naturally eager to check the rise of Sher, which prejudiced his own prestige and power. But the brave Afghān deputy inflicted a defeat on the allied troops of the Bengal Sultān and the Lohānīs at Surajgarh, on the banks of the Kiul river, east of the town of Bihār. The victory at Surajgarh was indeed a turning-point in the career of Sher. "Great as it was as a military achievement, it was greater in its far-reaching political result. . . . But for the victory at Surajgarh, the *jāgīrdār* of Sasarām would never have emerged from his obscurity into the

arena of politics to run, in spite of himself, a race for the Empire with hereditary crowned heads like Bahādur Shāh and Humāyūn Pādshāh." It made him the undisputed ruler of Bihār in fact as well as in name.

Sher had an opportunity to increase his power when Humāyūn marched against Bahādur Shāh of Gujarāt. He suddenly invaded Bengal and appeared before its capital, Gaur, not by the usual route through the Teliāgarhī passes (near modern Sāhebganj on the E.I. Ry. Loop Line), but by another unfrequented and less circuitous one. Mahmūd Shāh, the weak ruler of Bengal, without making any serious attempt to oppose the Afghān invader, concluded peace with him by paying him a large sum, amounting to thirteen lacs of gold pieces, and by ceding to him a territory extending from Kiul to Sakrigalī, ninety miles in length with a breadth of thirty miles. These fresh acquisitions considerably enhanced Sher's power and prestige, and, after the expulsion of Bahādur Shāh of Gujarāt to Diu, many of the distinguished Afghān nobles joined their rising leader in the east. Thus strengthened, Sher again invaded Bengal about the middle of October, 1537, with a view to conquering it permanently, and closely besieged the city of Gaur. Humāyūn, who on his way back from Gujarāt and Mālwa had been wasting his time at Āgra, in his usual fashion, realised the gravity of the Afghān menace in the east rather too late and marched to oppose Sher Khān in the second week of December, 1537. But instead of proceeding straight to Gaur, by which he could have frustrated the designs of Sher Khān in alliance with the Sultān of Bengal, he besieged Chunār. The brave garrison of Sher Khān at Chunār baffled all the attempts of the assailants for six months, while Sher Khān was left free to utilise that time for the reduction of Gaur by April, 1538. Sher Khān had also captured the fortress of Rohtās by questionable means and had sent his family and wealth there. Baffled in Bihār, Humāyūn turned towards Bengal and entered Gaur in July, 1538. But Sher Khān, cleverly avoiding any open contest with him in Bengal, went to occupy the Mughul territories in Bihār and Jaunpur and plunder the tract as far west as Kanauj.

Humāyūn, who was then whiling away his time in idleness and festivities at Gaur, was disconcerted on hearing of Sher's activities in the west and left Bengal for Āgra before his return should be cut off. But he was opposed on the way, at Chaunsa near Buxar, by Sher Khān and his Afghān followers and suffered a heavy defeat in June, 1539. Most of the Mughul soldiers were drowned or captured; and the life of their unlucky ruler was saved

by a water-carrier, who carried him on his water-skin across the Ganges, into which he had recklessly jumped.

The victory over the sovereign of Delhi widened the limit of Sher Khān's ambition and made him the *de facto* ruler of the territories extending from Kanauj in the west to the hills of Assam and Chittagong in the east and from the Himālayas in the north to the hills of Jhārkhand (from Rohtās to Bīrbhūm) and the Bay of Bengal in the south. To legalise what he had gained by the strength of arms and strategy, he now assumed the royal title of Sher Shāh and ordered the *Khutba* to be read and the coins to be struck in his name. Next year Humāyūn made another attempt to recover his fortune, though he could not secure the co-operation of his brothers in spite of his best attempts. On the 17th May, 1540, the Mughuls and the Afghāns met again opposite Kanauj. The army of Humāyūn, hopelessly demoralised, half-hearted and badly officered, was severely defeated by the Afghāns at the battle of the Ganges or Bilgrām, commonly known as the battle of Kanauj, and Humāyūn just managed to escape. Thus the work of Bābur in India was undone, and the sovereignty of Hindustān once more passed to the Afghāns. From this time Humāyūn had to lead the life of a wanderer for about fifteen years.

The sons of Bābur failed to combine even at such a critical moment, though Humāyūn went to Lahore and did his best to win them over. Their selfishness triumphed over common interests and Sher Shāh was able to extend his authority to the Punjab also. The Afghān ruler marched, with his usual promptitude and vigour, to subdue the warlike hill tribes of the Gakkar country, situated between the upper courses of the Indus and the Jhelum. He ravaged this territory but could not thoroughly reduce the Gakkars, as he had to proceed hurriedly to Bengal in March, 1541, where his deputy had imprudently rebelled against his authority. He dismissed the rebel, "changed the military character of the provincial administration and substituted a completely new mechanism, at once original in principle and efficient in working". The province was divided into several districts, each of which was to be governed by an officer appointed directly by him and responsible to him alone.

Sher Shāh next turned his attention against the Rājputs of the west, who had not yet recovered fully from the blow of Khānua. Having subjugated Mālwa in A.D. 1542, he marched against Pūran Mal of Rāisin in Central India. After some resistance the garrison of the fort of Rāisin capitulated, the Rājputs agreeing to evacuate the fort on condition that they were allowed to pass "unmolested"

beyond the frontier of Mālwa. But the Afghāns fell furiously on the people of the fort as soon as the latter had come outside the walls. To save their wives and children from disgrace, the Rājputs took their lives, and themselves died to a man, fighting bravely against their formidable foe, in 1543. The Rāisin incident has been condemned by several writers as a great blot on the character of Sher Shāh. Sind and Multān were annexed to the Afghān Empire by the governor of the Punjab. There remained only one more formidable enemy of Sher Shāh to be subdued. He was Māldev, the Rājput ruler of Mārwār, a consummate general and energetic ruler, whose territories extended over about 10,000 square miles. Instigated by some disaffected Rājput chiefs whose territories had been conquered by Māldev, Sher Khān led an expedition against the Rāthor chief in A.D. 1544. Māldev, on his part, was not unprepared. Considering it inadvisable to risk an open battle with the Rāthors in their own country, Sher Shāh had recourse to a stratagem. He sent to Māldev a few forged letters, said to have been written to him by the Rājput generals, promising him their help, and thus succeeded in frightening the Rāthor ruler, who retreated from the field and took refuge in the fortress of Sivan. In spite of this, the generals of the Rājput army, like Jeta and Kama, with their followers, opposed Sher Shāh's army and fought with desperate valour, but only to meet a warrior's death. Sher Shāh won a victory, though at great cost, with the loss of several thousand Afghāns on the battlefield and coming near to losing his empire. The Rājputs lost a chance of revival and the path was left open for undisputed Afghān supremacy over Northern India. After this success, Sher Shāh reduced to submission the whole region from Ajmer to Ābū and marched to besiege the fort of Kālinjar. He succeeded in capturing the fort, but died from an accidental explosion of gunpowder on the 22nd May, 1545.

A brave warrior and a successful conqueror, Sher Shāh was the architect of a brilliant administrative system, which elicited admiration even from eulogists of his enemies, the Mughuls. In fact, his qualities as a ruler were more remarkable than his victories on the field of battle. His brief reign of five years was marked by the introduction of wise and salutary changes in every conceivable branch of administration. Some of these were by way of revival and reformation of the traditional features of the old administrative systems of India, Hindu as well as Muslim, while others were entirely original in character, and form, indeed, a link between ancient and modern India. "No government—not even the British," affirms Mr. Keene, "has shown so much wisdom

as this Pathān. Though Sher Shāh's government was a highly centralised system, crowned by a bureaucracy, with real power concentrated in the hands of the King, he was not an unbridled autocrat, regardless of the rights and interests of the people. In the spirit of an enlightened despot, he "attempted to found an empire broadly based upon the people's will".

For convenience of administration, the whole Empire was divided into forty-seven units (*sarkārs*), each of which was again subdivided into several *paraganās*. The *paraganā* had one *Amīn*, one *Shiqdār*, one treasurer, one Hindu writer and one Persian writer to keep accounts. Over the next higher administrative unit, the *sarkār*, were placed a *Shiqdār-i-Shiqdārān* and a *Munsif-i-Munsifān* to supervise the work of the *paraganā* officers. To check undue influence of the officers in their respective jurisdictions, the King devised the plan of transferring them every two or three years, which, however, could not be long-enduring owing to the brief span of his rule. Every branch of the administration was subject to Sher Shāh's personal supervision. Like Aśoka and Harsha, he acted up to the maxim that "it behoves the great to be always active".

Sher Shāh's land revenue reforms, based on wise and humane principles, have unique importance in the administrative history of India; for they served as the model for future agrarian systems. After a careful and proper survey of the lands, he settled the land revenue direct with the cultivators, the State demand being fixed at one-fourth or one-third of the average produce, payable either in kind or in cash, the latter method being preferred. For actual collection of revenue the Government utilised the services of officers like the *Amīns*, the *Maqadams*, the *Shiqdārs*, the *Qānūngos* and the *Patwārīs*. Punctual and full payment of the assessed amount was insisted on and enforced, if necessary, by Sher Shāh. He instructed the revenue officials to show leniency at the time of assessment and to be strict at the time of collection of revenues. The rights of the tenants were duly recognised and the liabilities of each were clearly defined in the *kabuliyat* (deed of agreement), which the State took from him, and the *paṭṭā* (title-deed), which it gave him in return. Remissions of rents were made, and probably loans were advanced to the tenants in case of damage to crops, caused by the encampment of soldiers, or the insufficiency of rain. These revenue reforms increased the resources of the State and at the same time conduced to the interest of the people.

The currency and tariff reforms of Sher Shāh were also calculated to improve the general economic condition of his Empire. He not

only introduced some specific changes in the mint but also tried to rectify "the progressive deterioration of the previous Kings". He reformed the tariff by removing vexatious customs and permitting the imposition of customs on articles of trade only at the frontiers and in the places of sale. This considerably helped the cause of trade and commerce by facilitating easy and cheap transport of merchandise.

This was further helped by the improvement of communications. For the purpose of imperial defence, as well as for the convenience of the people, Sher Shāh connected the important places of his kingdom by a chain of excellent roads. The longest of these, the Grand Trunk Road, which still survives, extended for 1,500 *kos* from Sonārgaon in Eastern Bengal to the Indus. One road ran from Āgra to Burhānpur, another from Āgra to Jodhpur and the fort of Chitor, and a fourth from Lahore to Multān. Following the traditions of some rulers of the past, Sher Shāh planted shade-giving trees on both sides of the established roads, and *sarāis* or rest-houses at different stages, separate arrangements being provided for the Muslims and the Hindus. These *sarāis* also served the purpose of post-houses, which facilitated quick exchange of news and supplied the Government with information from different parts of the Empire. The maintenance of an efficient system of espionage also enabled the ruler to know what happened in his kingdom.

To secure peace and order, the police system was reorganised, and the principle of local responsibility for local crimes was enforced. Thus the village headmen were made responsible for the detection of criminals, and maintenance of peace, in the rural areas. The efficiency of the system has been testified to by all the Muslim writers. "Such was the state of safety of the highway," observes Nizām-ud-dīn, who had no reason to be partial towards Sher Shāh, "that if any one carried a purse full of gold (pieces) and slept in the desert (deserted places) for nights, there was no need for keeping watch."

Sher Shāh had a strong sense of justice, and its administration under him was even-handed, no distinction being made between the high and the low, and not even the near relatives of the King being spared from its decrees. In the *paraganā*, civil suits were disposed of by the *Amīn*, and other cases, mostly criminal, by the *Qāzī* and the *Mīr-i-Adal*. Several *paraganās* had over them a *Munsif-i-Munsifān* to try civil cases. At the capital city there were the Chief *Qāzī*, the imperial *Sadr*, and above all, the Emperor as the highest authority in judicial as in other matters.

Though a pious Muslim, Sher Shāh was not a fierce bigot.[1] His treatment of the Hindus in general was tolerant and just. He employed Hindus in important offices of the State, one of his best generals being Brahmajit Gaur. "His attitude towards Hinduism," observes Dr. Qanungo, "was not of contemptuous sufferance but of respectful deference; it received due recognition in the State."

Sher Shāh realised the importance of maintaining a strong and efficient army, and so reorganised it, borrowing largely the main principles of 'Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī's military system. The services of a body of armed retainers, or of a feudal levy, were not considered sufficient for his needs; he took care to maintain a regular army, the soldiers being bound to him, through their immediate commanding officer, by the strong tie of personal devotion and discipline. He had under his direct command a large force consisting of 150,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry, 300 elephants and artillery. Garrisons were maintained at different strategic points of the kingdom; each of these, called a *fauj*, was under the command of a *faujdār*. Sher Shāh enforced strict discipline in the army and took ample precautions to prevent corruption among the soldiers. Besides duly supervising the recruitment of soldiers, he personally fixed their salaries, took their descriptive rolls and revived the practice of branding horses.

Sher Shāh is indeed a striking personality in the history of Medieval India. By virtue of sheer merit and ability he rose from a very humble position to be the leader of Afghān revival, and one of the greatest rulers that India has produced. His "military character" was marked by "a rare combination of caution and enterprise"; his political conduct was, on the whole, just and humane; his religious attitude was free from medieval bigotry; and his excellent taste in building is well attested, even to-day, by his noble mausoleum at Sasarām. He applied his indefatigable industry to the service of the State, and his reforms were well calculated to secure the interests of the people. He had, remarks Erskine, "more of the spirit of a legislator and a guardian of his people than any prince before Akbar". In fact, the real significance of his reign lies in the fact that he embodied in himself those very qualities which are needed for the building of a national State in India, and he prepared the ground for the glorious Akbaride régime in more ways than one. But for his accidental death after

[1] It does not seem to be fair to describe Sher Shāh's religious policy as "narrow" as a modern writer has done. *Vide I.H.Q.*, December, 1936, pp. 600–1.

only five years' rule, the restoration of the Mughuls would not have been accomplished so soon. As Smith observes: "If Sher Shāh had been spared, the 'Great Moghuls' would not have appeared on the stage of history." His right to the throne of India was better than that of Humāyūn. While Humāyūn had inherited the conquests of a Central Asian adventurer, who had not been able to create any strong claim, except that of force, for the rule of his dynasty in India, Sher Shāh's family, hailing from the frontier, had lived within India for three generations. Further, the latter's equipment for kingship was exceptionally high, and he had achieved a good deal more than the mere conquest of territories.

4. The Successors of Sher Shāh

The Afghān Empire built up by Sher Shāh did not long survive his death. The disappearance of his strong personality, and the weakness of his successors, led to the recrudescence of jealousies and refractoriness among the Afghān nobles, which plunged the whole kingdom into a welter of anarchy and thus paved the way for Mughul restoration. On Sher Shāh's death, his second son, Jalāl Khān, who was then at Rewah, was proclaimed king under the title of Sultān Islām Shāh, commonly known as Salīm Shāh. Salīm strengthened his position against the intrigues of his brother and his supporters, by drastic measures. He maintained the efficiency of the army and most of his father's wise reforms. "His internal administration was excellent." But he died young in November, 1554, and disorders soon followed. His minor son, Fīrūz Khān, was murdered by his maternal uncle, Mubāriz Khān (son of Nizām Khān Sūr, Sher Shāh's brother, and brother of Fīrūz Khān's mother, Bibi Bāi), who seized the throne and assumed the title of Muhammad 'Ādil Shāh. 'Ādil Shāh being an indolent and worthless prince, Hīmū, a purely self-made man, who rose from the position of an ordinary Beniā of Rewārī in Mewāt to that of the chief minister of the Sūr monarch, tried to manage the affairs of the kingdom with tact; but the suspicious nature, and the follies, of his master frustrated his efforts with great prejudice to the interests of the decaying Afghān Empire. 'Ādil Shāh soon afterwards lost Bengal and Mālwa; his own relatives rebelled against him; and his authority was also challenged by two nephews of Sher Shāh, who asserted their claims to the throne.

5. Restoration of the Mughuls

This disturbed situation encouraged Humāyūn to attempt the restoration of his lost dominion after about fifteen years. He had been wandering from place to place in search of shelter and help. So intense was the jealousy of his brothers, especially of Kāmrān, that they showed him great unkindness even in these days of adversity, not to speak of their pooling their resources against the Afghāns. His attempts to find a rallying-ground in Sind also proved unsuccessful, because of the hostility of Shāh Husain, the governor of Sind, and the scarcity of provisions among his followers, whose numbers had been swelled by the influx of many fugitives. It was during his wanderings in the deserts of Sind that early in 1542 he married Hamīda Bānu Begam, daughter of Shaikh 'Ālī Ambar Jaini, who had been a preceptor to Humāyūn's brother Hindāl. The Rājput princes dared not afford him shelter. He went to Amarkot, the Hindu chief of which, Rānā Prasād by name, had promised help to conquer Thatta and Bhakkar, but he disappointed him in the end. It was here that his son Akbar was born on the 23rd November, 1542. Bhakkar could not be conquered by Humāyūn, who failed also to secure asylum with his brother Kāmrān. Thus driven from pillar to post, Humāyūn left India and threw himself on the generosity of Shāh Tahmāsp. The young ruler of Persia helped him with a force of 14,000 men on his promising to conform to the Shiah creed, to have the Shāh's name proclaimed in his *Khutba* and to cede Qandahār to him on his success. Thus Persian help, which had once facilitated the success of Bābur's eastern enterprise, now enabled his successor to recover his lost dominion. With it Humāyūn occupied Qandahār and Kābul in 1545. But Qandahār was not given to the Persians, and it proved henceforth to be a bone of contention between them and the Mughuls. Kāmrān was imprisoned, blinded and sent to Mecca, to which Humāyūn consented with the utmost reluctance, though his brother merited no lenient treatment in view of his past conduct. 'Askarī also proceeded to Mecca, but Hindāl fell dead in a night encounter.

Having overcome the hostility of his unkind brothers in the north-west, Humāyūn marched in November, 1554, to reconquer Hindustān, for which he got an excellent opportunity in the civil wars among the Sūrs. In February, 1555, he captured Lahore. After defeating Sikandar Sūr, the rebel governor of the Punjab, who had been proclaimed Emperor by the Afghāns, in a battle near Sirhind, he occupied Delhi and Āgra in the month of July of the same year.

Sikandar retired to the Siwālik Hills. Thus by a favourable turn of fortune, Humāyūn succeeded in recovering a part of what he had lost through his own weakness and indecision. But he did not live long enough to show if adversity had produced any wholesome effect on his character. He died on the 24th January, 1556, in consequence of an accidental fall from the staircase of his library at Delhi.

Akbar, who was then in the Punjab with his guardian Bairam, an old comrade of his father, was formally proclaimed on the 14th February, 1556, at the age of thirteen, as the successor of Humāyūn. But the Mughul supremacy over Hindustān was still far from being assured. As Smith writes, "before Akbar could become Pādshāh in reality as well as in name he had to prove himself better than the rival claimants to the throne, and at least to win back his father's lost dominion". As a matter of fact, India in 1556 "presented a dark as well as a complex picture". While the country had ceased to enjoy the benefits of the reforms of Sher Shāh through the follies and quarrels of his successors, it was subjected at the same time to the horrors of a terrible famine. Further, each of the independent kingdoms in different parts of India was contending for power. In the north-west, Mīrzā Muhammad Hakīm, Akbar's half-brother, governed Kābul almost independently. In the north, Kāshmīr was under a local Muhammadan dynasty and the Himālayan States were also independent. Sind and Multān had become free from imperial control after the death of Sher Shāh. Orissa, Mālwa and Gujarāt and the local chieftains of Gondwāna (in the modern Central Provinces) were independent of the control of any overlord. South of the Vindhyas lay the extensive Vijayanagar Empire, and the Muslim Sultānates of Khāndesh, Berar, Bīdar, Ahmadnagar, and Golkundā which felt little or no interest in northern politics. The Portuguese had established their influence on the western coast by the possession of Goa and Diu. Humāyūn had been able to recover only a small fragment of his territories in Hindustān before he died. The Sūrs were still in occupation of the greater portion of Sher Shāh's dominion. As Ahmad Yadgar tells us, "the country from Āgra to Mālwa, and the confines of Jaunpur, owned the sovereignty of 'Ādil Shāh; from Delhi to the smaller Rohtās on the road to Kābul, it was in the hands of Shāh Sikandar; and from the borders of the hills to the boundaries of Gujarāt, it belonged to Ibrāhīm Khān". As for the claims to the lordship of Hindustān, there was nothing to choose between Akbar and the representatives of Sher. These "could be decided", as Smith writes, "only by the sword". Thus Akbar's heritage was of a precarious nature, and

his task of building up an Empire was indeed a very difficult one.

Soon after Akbar's accession, Hīmū, the capable general and minister of 'Ādil Shāh Sūr, came forward to oppose the Mughuls. He first occupied Āgra and Delhi by defeating Tārdī Beg, the Mughul governor of Delhi, who was put to death under the orders of Bairam for his failure to defend Delhi. Having assumed the title of Rājā Vikramjit or Vikramāditya, Hīmū met Akbar and Bairam at the historic field of Pānīpat with a large army including 1,500 war elephants. He had initial successes against both the wings of the Mughul army, but the day was decided by a chance arrow which struck him in the eye. He lost consciousness, and his soldiers, deprived of their leader, dispersed in confusion. In this helpless condition, Hīmū was put to death, according to some, by Bairam, on the refusal of Akbar to kill him with his own hands, and, according to others, by Akbar himself at the instigation of his Protector.

The result of the second battle of Pānīpat was decisive. It brought to a close the Afghān-Mughul contest for supremacy in India by giving a verdict in favour of the latter. The victors soon occupied Delhi and Āgra. Sikandar Sūr surrendered himself to them in May, A.D. 1557, and was granted a fief in the eastern provinces, whence he was soon expelled by Akbar and died as a fugitive in Bengal (A.D. 1558–1559). Muhammad 'Ādil died (1556) fighting at Monghyr against the governor of Bengal. Ibrāhīm Sūr, after wandering from place to place, found asylum in Orissa, where he was killed about ten years later (A.D. 1567–1568). Thus there remained no Sūr rival to contest Akbar's claims to sovereignty over Hindustān. The later anti-Mughul Afghān risings, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were more or less too sporadic and local to be a serious menace to Mughul suzerainty.

CHAPTER II

AKBAR THE GREAT

1. End of the Regency

THE second battle of Pānīpat marked the real beginning of the Mughul Empire in India and set it on the path of expansion. Between 1558 and 1560 Gwālior, Ajmer and Jaunpur were incorporated into it. But Akbar, held in the trammels of tutelage by his guardian and Protector, Bairam Khān, was not yet free to act independently. The Protector had rendered valuable services to the Mughuls, but he had created many enemies by this time by using his power in a high-handed manner. Abul Fazl writes that "at length Bairam's proceedings went beyond all endurance". Akbar personally felt a desire to be king in fact as well as in name, and was also urged by his mother, Hamīda Bānu Begam, his foster-mother, Māham Anaga, and her son, Ādam Khān, to get rid of the regent. In 1560 the Emperor openly expressed before Bairam his determination to take the reins of government in his own hands and dismissed him. The Protector submitted to the decision of his master with apparent resignation and agreed to leave for Mecca. But when Akbar deputed Pīr Muhammad, a personal enemy and former subordinate of Bairam, to see his guardian out of the imperial domains, or as Badāūnī puts it, "to pack him off as quickly as possible to Mecca", the latter, considering it to be an insult, rebelled. He was defeated near Jullundur, but Akbar was wise enough to treat him with generosity in consideration of his past services. On his way to Mecca, Bairam was stabbed to death in January, 1561, by a Lohānī Afghān, whose father had been killed on a previous occasion by the Mughul troops under the command of the Protector. Though the Afghāns plundered all that he had been carrying with him, his family escaped disgrace and his son, 'Abdur Rahīm, received Akbar's protection and rose later on to be one of the chief nobles of the Empire.

The fall of Bairam did not at once enable Akbar to assume fully the reins of government into his own hands. For two years more (A.D. 1560–1562), his foster-mother, Māham Anaga, her son, Ādam

Khān, and their relatives, exercised an undue influence in the State. Ādam Khān and Pīr Muhammad effected the conquest of Mālwa (1561) by methods which have been vividly described by Badāūnī, an eye-witness of their oppression; but they remained unpunished. Being at last impatient of their influence, Akbar caused the death of Ādam Khān. His mother died of grief after forty days. Thus by the month of May, 1562, Akbar was able to emancipate himself from harem influence.

2. Conquests and Annexations

A strong imperialist by instinct, Akbar followed a policy of conquest for the expansion of his empire until the capture of Asīrgarh in January, 1601. Unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances prevented him from carrying it further. "A monarch", he held, "should be ever intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him." In fact, Akbar achieved the political unification of nearly the whole of Northern and Central India by frequent annexations extending over forty years. We have already noted how Mālwa was conquered by Ādam Khān and Pīr Muhammad in 1561, but its ruler, Bāz Bahādur, soon recovered it and did not submit to the Mughuls until some years later. In 1564 Akbar sent Āsaf Khān, governor of Karā and the eastern provinces, to conquer the kingdom of Garah Katanga (in Gondwāna), roughly corresponding to the northern districts of the Central Provinces. The reigning king of this tract, Bīr Nārāyan, was a minor, but it was ably governed by his mother, Durgāvatī, a Rājput lady of superb beauty and great valour. She gallantly opposed the imperialists but was defeated in a fight with them between Garah and Mandala (now in the Jubbulpore district). In the true Rājput spirit, she preferred death to disgrace and committed suicide. Thus "her end was as noble and devoted as her life had been useful". The young ruler, Bīr Nārāyan, fought in a chivalrous manner against his enemies till he lost his life. The invaders captured a vast booty. Āsaf Khān held the kingdom for some time, but it was subsequently made over to a representative of the old ruling family, who was compelled by the Mughuls to "part with that portion of his kingdom which now forms the kingdom of Bhopāl".

As we have already noted, the battle of Khānua (1527) did not result in the total eclipse of Rājput influence in the north. Rājputāna still formed a powerful factor in the history of India. Gifted with the true insight of a statesman and liberal in outlook, Akbar realised the value of Rājput alliance in his task of building up an Empire in

India for his dynasty, which was a foreign one, at the cost of the Afghāns, who were the "children of the soil". Thus he tried, as far as possible, to conciliate the Rājputs and secure and ensure their active co-operation in almost all his activities. By his wise and liberal policy, he won the hearts of most of them to such an extent that they rendered valuable services to his empire and even shed their blood for it. The Empire of Akbar was, in fact, the outcome of the co-ordination of Mughul prowess and diplomacy and Rājput valour and service. In 1562, Rājā Bihārī Mall, of Amber (Jaipur), tendered his submission to Akbar and cemented his friendship with him by a marriage alliance. Bihārī Mall, with his son, Bhagwān Dās and grandson, Mān Singh, proceeded to Āgra. He was given a command of 5,000 and his son and grandson were also admitted to high rank in the army. Thus was opened the way through which the Mughul Emperors were able to secure for four generations "the services of some of the greatest captains and diplomats that medieval India produced".

But Mewār, where the Rājput spirit had manifested itself "in its very quintessence", which had been provided with excellent means of defence in its steep mountains and strong castles, and which had contested with Bābur the supremacy of Northern India, did not bow its head in obedience to the Mughul Emperor. It offended him by giving shelter to Bāz Bahādur, the fugitive ruler of Mālwa. Its independence was, however, galling to Akbar, who cherished the ideal of an all-India empire, the economic interests of which also demanded a control over Mewār, through which lay the highways of commerce between the Ganges–Jumnā Doāb and the western coast. The ambitious design of Akbar was facilitated by the prevalence of internal discord in Mewār, following the death of Rānā Sanga, and by the weakness of Udai Singh, the unworthy son of a noble sire. "Well had it been for Mewār," exclaims Tod, "had the annals of Mewār never recorded the name of Udai Singh in the catalogue of her princes." When Akbar besieged the fort of Chitor in October, 1567, Udai Singh fled to the hills, leaving his capital to its fate. But there were some brave followers of the Rānā, notably Jaimall and Patta, who offered a stubborn opposition to the imperialists for four months (20th October, 1567, to 23rd February, 1568) till Jaimall was killed by a musket-shot fired by Akbar himself. Patta also fell dead later. The death of the leaders of the defence disheartened the besieged garrison, who rushed on their enemies sword in hand and fought bravely till they perished to a man. The Rājput women performed the rite of *Jauhar*. Akbar then stormed the fort of Chitor. According to

Abul Fazl 30,000 persons were slain, but the figure seems to be highly exaggerated. Akbar's wrath fell also upon what Tod calls "the symbols of regality". Thus he removed the huge kettledrums (eight or ten feet in diameter, the reverberation of which proclaimed for miles around the entrance and exit of the princes from the gates of Chitor) and also the massive candelabra from the shrine of the Great Mother of Chitor, to Āgra.

Struck with terror at the fall of Chitor, the other Rājput chiefs, who had so long defied Akbar, submitted to him. In February, 1569, Rāi Surjana Hara of Ranthambhor surrendered to Akbar the keys of his fortress and entered into the imperial service. Rājā Rāmchānd, the chief of Kālinjar in Bundelkhand, followed suit in the same year. The occupation of Kālinjar greatly strengthened Akbar's military position and marks an important step in the progress of Mughul imperialism. In 1570 the rulers of Bikāner and Jaisalmer not only submitted to the Mughul Emperor but also gave their daughters in marriage to him.

Thus, one by one, the Rājput chiefs acknowledged Mughul sway, but Mewār still refused to own it. Udai Singh retained his independence though he had lost his ancestral capital. After his death on the 3rd March, 1572, at Gogundā, situated about nineteen miles north-west of Udaipur, Mewār found a true patriot and leader in his son Pratāp, who, being in every respect faithful to the traditions of his country, offered uncompromising resistance to the invaders. The magnitude of his task can be well understood when we note that without a capital, and with only slender resources, he had to oppose the organised strength of the Mughul Emperor, who was then "immeasurably the richest monarch on the face of the earth". Further, his fellow chiefs and neighbours and even his own brother, devoid of the high Rājput ideals of chivalry and independence, had allied themselves with the Mughuls. But no obstacle was too alarming for this national hero of Rājputāna, who was made of nobler stuff than his relatives. "The magnitude of the peril confirmed the fortitude of Pratāp, who vowed, in the words of the bard, 'to make his mother's milk resplendent,' and he amply redeemed his pledge." The inevitable imperial invasion of his territory took place in April, 1576, under a body of troops commanded by Mān Singh of Amber and Āsaf Khān, and a furious battle was fought at the pass of Haldighāt near Gogundā. Pratāp was defeated, and barely escaped with his life, which was saved by the selfless devotion of the chief of Jhāla, who drew upon himself the attack of the imperialists by declaring himself to be the *Rānā*. Mounted on his

beloved horse "*Chaitak*", the Rānā betook himself to the hills, and his strongholds were captured by his enemies one by one. But Pratāp could not think of submission even in the midst of the direst adversity. Hunted from rock to rock by his implacable enemy, and "feeding his family from the fruits of his native hills", he continued the war with undaunted spirit and energy and had the satisfaction of recovering many of his strongholds before he died on the 19th January, 1597, at the age of fifty-seven. The Rājput patriot was anxious for his motherland even at his last moment, for he had no faith in his son; and before he expired, he exacted from his chiefs "a pledge that his country should not be abandoned to the Turks". "Thus closed the life of a Rājput whose memory," observes Tod, "is even now idolized by every Sisodiā." "Had Mewār," he adds, ' possessed her Thucydides or her Xenophon, neither the wars of the Peloponnesus nor the retreat of the 'Ten Thousand' would have yielded more diversified incidents for the historic muse than the deeds of this brilliant reign amid the many vicissitudes of Mewār. Undaunted heroism, inflexible fortitude, that sincerity which 'keeps honour bright', perseverance—with fidelity such as no nation can boast of, were the materials opposed to a soaring ambition, commanding talents, unlimited means, and the fervour of religious zeal; all, however, insufficient to contend with one unconquerable mind." Pratāp's is indeed an inspiring personality in Indian history. The Rājputs have produced abler generals and more astute statesmen than Pratāp, but not more brave and noble patriotic leaders than he. Pratāp's son, Amar Singh, tried to carry out the behest of his father but was attacked by a Mughul army under Mān Singh in 1599 and was defeated after a gallant resistance. Akbar could not undertake any other invasion of Mewār owing to illness.

After annexing Ranthambhor and Kālinjar in A.D. 1569, the Mughuls subjugated Gujarāt. With rich and flourishing ports on its coasts, Gujarāt had an attractive commercial position and a special economic advantage. Its possession had therefore been coveted by the preceding rulers of Delhi, even by Humāyūn, whose occupation of it was, however, temporary. But Akbar must have realised the importance of occupying this province for the interests of his Empire, and the prevailing distracted condition of Gujarāt under its nominal king, Muzaffar Shāh III, gave him an excellent opportunity for it. As a matter of fact, his intervention being sought by I'timād Khān, the leader of a local faction, had some justification. In 1572 Akbar marched in person against Gujarāt, defeated all opposition and pensioned off the puppet

king. He captured Surāt on the 26th February, 1573, after besieging it for a month and a half, and the Portuguese, who came in touch with him on this occasion, courted his friendship. But no sooner had he reached his headquarters at Fathpur Sīkrī than insurrections broke out in the newly conquered province, in which some of his own cousins took part. Highly enraged at this, Akbar marched hurriedly to Ahmadābād, having traversed six hundred miles in eleven days, and thoroughly vanquished the insurgents in a battle near Ahmadābād on the 2nd September, 1573. Gujarāt thus came under Akbar's authority and became henceforth an integral part of his Empire. It turned out to be one of its profitable sources of income, chiefly through the reorganisation of its finances and revenues by Todar Mal, whose work in that province was ably carried on by Shihāb-ud-dīn Ahmad from 1577 to 1583 or 1584. "The conquest of Gujarāt," remarks Dr. Smith, "marks an important epoch in Akbar's history." Besides placing its resources at the disposal of the Empire, it secured for it free access to the sea and brought it in contact with the Portuguese, which in some ways influenced the history of India. But the Mughuls made no attempt to build up any sea-power and their shortsightedness in this direction helped the intrusion of the European traders.

The more important province of Bengal was next conquered by the Mughuls. The Sūr kings made themselves independent in Bengal during the short and stormy reign of Muhammad 'Ādil Shāh and ruled it till 1564, when, taking advantage of the disorders following the murder of the reigning young king, Sulaimān Kararānī, governor of South Bihār, extended his authority over Bengal also. Till his death in A.D. 1572, Sulaimān formally recognised the overlordship of Akbar and maintained friendly relations with him. He transferred his capital from Gaur to Tāndā and annexed the Hindu kingdom of Orissa. But his son, Dāūd, who, according to the author of the *Tabaqāt*, "knew nothing of the art of government", soon "forsook the prudent measures of his father". He incurred the Emperor's resentment not only by proclaiming his independence but also by attacking the outpost of Zamāniā on the eastern frontier of the Empire (situated in the Ghāzīpur district of U.P.). In 1574 Akbar himself marched against the presumptuous governor of Bengal and expelled him from Patna and Hājīpur during the rainy season. He returned to Fathpur Sīkrī, leaving Mun'im Khān in charge of the Bengal campaign. Dāūd retreated towards Orissa and was defeated by the Mughul troops at Tukaroi near the eastern bank of the Suvarnarekhā on the 3rd March, 1575. But this battle had no

decisive result owing to the ill-advised leniency of Mun'im Khān towards the vanquished foe, who was consequently able to strike once more to recover Bengal in October, 1575. This necessitated another campaign against Dāūd, who was finally defeated and killed in a battle, near Rājmahal, in July, 1576. Bengal henceforth became an integral part of the Mughul Empire. But the weak policy of the imperial governor, Muzaffar Khān Turbatī, who was "harsh in his measures and offensive in his speech", gave rise to fresh troubles in that province. Further, the authority of the Emperor continued to be long resisted there by some powerful Bengal chiefs, the most important of whom were 'Isā Khān of East Central Dacca and Mymensingh, Kedār Rāi of Vikrampur, Kandarpanārāyan of Chandradvīpa (Bakarganj) and Pratāpāditya of Jessore. Orissa was finally annexed to the Empire in 1592.

In the meanwhile, Akbar had to face a critical situation due to the sinister motives of his step-brother, Mīrzā Muhammad Hakīm, who governed Kābul as an independent ruler for all practical purposes. In conspiracy with some nobles of the eastern provinces, and some discontented officers of the court, like Khwāja Mansūr, the *Diwān* of the Empire, and others, he cherished the ambition of seizing the throne of Hindustān for himself and even invaded the Punjab. Considering it inadvisable to ignore any longer his intrigues and movements, Akbar marched from his capital on the 8th February, 1581, towards Afghānistān with about 50,000 cavalry, 500 elephants and a large number of infantry. Mīrzā Muhammad Hakīm, on hearing of the Emperor's advance, fled from the Punjab to Kābul without offering any opposition to his brother. The Emperor thereupon entered Kābul on the 9th August, 1581. Mīrzā Muhammad Hakīm was defeated, but was restored to the government of his province on taking a vow of fidelity to the Emperor, who returned to Delhi early in December, 1581. The victory at Kābul brought immense relief to Akbar. It gave him, writes Smith, "an absolutely free hand for the rest of his life, and may be regarded as the climax of his career". Kābul was formally annexed to the Delhi empire after the death of Mīrzā Muhammad Hakīm in July, 1585.

3. The North-West Frontier.

Every government in India has to deal with the complex north-west frontier problem. This region occupies a position of strategic as well as economic importance, and it is, therefore, highly necessary for a ruler of India to maintain effective control over it. The

Hindukush range, separating Central Asia from Southern Afghānistān, Baluchistān and India, becomes "much less forbidding" in the north of Herāt, and through this vulnerable point an external invader from Persia or Central Asia may easily enter the Kābul Valley and India. As the master of Kābul, the Mughul Emperor "must hold Qandahār or his dominion is unsafe. In an age when Kābul was a part of the Delhi Empire, Qandahār was our indispensable first line of defence". Qandahār was also an important trade centre, where merchants from different parts of Asia flocked together and exchanged their commodities. Through it goods were carried from India to other Asiatic countries more frequently than before, owing to the Portuguese domination of the Red Sea and their hostile relations with Persia. Further, the turbulent Afghān tribes of the frontier, such as the Uzbegs and the Yūsufzāīs, were "very dangerous in their native hills, being democratic to a degree and fanatically attached to their liberty. Fighting in the fastnesses of their country which afford the best of natural defences, they . . . ever resisted any attempts to bring them into subjugation to any of the adjoining monarchies". Their attitude towards the Mughul Empire was far from friendly, but an imperialist like Akbar could hardly fail to realise the importance of effectively guarding this frontier. He was able to suppress the turbulence of the Uzbegs, whose leader, 'Abdullah Khān, remained friendly to the Mughul Emperor, and also to defeat the Roshniyās.[1] The Yūsufzāīs, too, were crushingly defeated by a large Mughul army commanded by Rājā Todar Mall and Prince Murād. Abul Fazl writes: "A large number of them were killed and many were sold into Turān and Persia. The countries of Sawad (Swāt), Bājaur and Buner, which have few equals for climate, fruits and cheapness of food, were cleansed of the evil-doers." Bhagwān Dās and Kāsīm Khān being deputed at the head of 5,000 men to conquer Kāshmīr, defeated its Sultān, Yūsuf Shāh, and his son, Ya'qūb, in 1586. Kāshmīr was then annexed to the Empire. Sind and Baluchistān were conquered in 1590-1591 and 1595 respectively. Qandahār came into the possession of Akbar peacefully. Being harassed by his own relatives and also by the Uzbegs, the Persian governor of Qandahār, Muzaffar Husain Mīrzā, surrendered it to Akbar's

[1] The Roshniyās were the followers of Bāyazīd, who "had been preaching a special form of Muhammadanism in which communism on the one hand and the destruction of the enemies of Islam on the other, seem to have been two of the leading features. Add to this his suggestion that he was the Mehdi (the Messiah) to come and we have all the elements of religious explosion". Kennedy, *History of the Great Moghuls*, p. 27.

representative, Shāh Beg, in A.D. 1595. Thus as a result of Akbar's policy in the north-west, important territories were added to his empire, its position was made secure on that frontier, and its prestige was immensely enhanced. By the year 1595 he made himself undisputed ruler of the area extending from the Himālayas to the Narmadā and from Hindukush to the Brahmaputra, with the exception of a narrow strip of tribal area beyond the Indus and a few other tracts.

4. Akbar and the Deccan

Having thus consolidated his authority over Northern and Central India, Akbar decided to extend his sovereignty to the Deccan. In this he was but following the traditional policy of earlier northern imperial governments, like those of the Mauryas, the Guptas, the Khaljīs and the Tughluqs. He had two definite objects in view. Firstly, with the ideal of an all-India Empire, he naturally sought to bring the Deccan Sultānates, Ahmadnagar, Bijāpur, Golkundā and Khāndesh, under his hegemony. Secondly, as a shrewd statesman, he wanted to utilise his control over the Deccan as a means of pushing back the Portuguese to the sea, because though his relations with them were apparently friendly, he did not think it wise to allow them to enjoy for themselves a part of the economic resources of the country and interfere in its politics. Thus Akbar's Deccan policy was purely imperialistic in origin and outlook. It was not influenced in the least by religious considerations as was the case, to a certain extent, with Shāh Jahān or Aurangzeb.

The Deccan Sultānates were not in a position to defend themselves against the onrush of Mughul imperialism, as they had almost exhausted their strength and sunk into inefficiency by indulging in quarrels among themselves after their temporary alliance against Vijayanagar in A.D. 1564–1565. Akbar first tried to extort from them a formal acknowledgment of his suzerainty over the Deccan by sending ambassadors to their respective courts in 1591. But all, except Khāndesh, returned evasive answers to his overtures. The failure of diplomatic missions led him to resort to arms. A large army under Bairam Khān's son, 'Abdur Rahīm, and the Emperor's second son, Prince Murād, was sent against Ahmadnagar, which had been weakened by internal quarrels. Though the operations of the Mughul army were much hampered, as its two generals did not pull well with each other, Ahmadnagar was besieged by it in 1595. The city was defended with splendid courage

and extraordinary resolution by Chānd Bibi, a dowager-queen of Bijāpur and daughter of Husain Nizām Shāh. The besiegers concluded a treaty with Chānd Bibi in 1596 whereby Berar was ceded to the Mughuls and the boy king of Ahmadnagar promised to recognise the overlordship of Akbar. But after the departure of the Mughuls, Chānd Bibi "resigned her authority", and a faction at Ahmadnagar, in violation of the treaty, contrary to her will and advice, renewed the war with the Mughuls in the next year with a view to expelling them from Berar. The Mughuls gained a victory over the Deccanis at Sūpa near Ashti on the Godāvarī in February, 1597. Internal dissensions prevailed in Ahmadnagar, and Chānd Bibi being either "murdered or constrained to take poison", the city was stormed without difficulty by the imperialists in August, 1600. But the kingdom was not finally annexed to the Empire till the reign of Shāh Jahān.

Miān Bahādur Shāh, a ruler of Khāndesh, refused to submit to the imperial authority. Akbar, relieved of the danger of Uzbeg invasion after the death of 'Abdullah Khān in 1598, marched to the south in July, 1599. He soon captured Burhānpur, the capital of Khāndesh, and easily laid siege to the mighty fortress of Asīrgarh, than which "it was impossible to conceive a stronger fortress, or one more amply supplied with artillery, warlike stores and provisions". The besieged garrison, though greatly weakened owing to the outbreak of a terrible pestilence which swept off many of them, defended the fortress for six months, when Akbar hastened to achieve his end by subtle means. Unwilling to prolong the siege as his son Salīm had rebelled against him, the Emperor inveigled Miān Bahādur Shāh into his camp to negotiate for a treaty, on promise of personal safety, but detained him there and forced him to write a letter to the garrison with instructions to surrender the fort. The garrison, however, still held out. Akbar next seduced the Khāndesh officers by lavish distribution of money among them, and thus the gates of Asīrgarh "were opened by golden keys". This was the last conquest of Akbar.

Having organised the newly-conquered territories into three *subahs* of Ahmadnagar, Berar and Khāndesh, and appointed Prince Dāniyāl viceroy of Southern and Western India, that is to say, of the three Deccan *subahs* with Mālwa and Gujarāt, Akbar returned to Āgra in May, 1601, to deal with the rebellious Salīm. The Deccan campaigns of Akbar resulted in pushing the Mughul frontier from the Narmadā to the upper courses of the Kṛishṇā river (called here the Bhīmā). But "the annexation was in form only. The new territory was too large to be effectively governed

or even fully conquered. Everywhere, especially in the south and the west, local officers of the old dynasty refused to obey the conqueror, or began to set up puppet princes as a screen for their self-assertion. The Sultāns of Bijāpur and Golkundā seized the adjacent districts of their fallen neighbours".

5. The Last Days of Akbar

The last days of Akbar were rendered unhappy by grief and anguish. His beloved friend and poet, Faizī, passed away in 1595. In eagerness to seize the throne, Salīm set himself up as an independent king at Allahābād and entered into intrigues with the Portuguese to achieve his end. In 1602 he further wounded his father's feelings by causing Abul Fazl, a close friend of the Emperor's, to be put to death on his way back from the Deccan. In 1603 a temporary reconciliation was effected between father and son through the mediation of Sultānā Salīmā Begam. But Salīm again proceeded to Allahābād and began to act in a highly objectionable manner. Meanwhile Khān-i-A'zam, Rājā Mān Singh and some other nobles of the court, plotted to secure the succession for Salīm's son, Khusrav. But their scheme failed owing to the opposition of other nobles. The other sons of Akbar had already died. Salīm, the only surviving son of Akbar, became reconciled to his father after the removal of all the rival claimants. Akbar treated him like a petulant child, rebuked him severely, and confined him for some time before pardoning him in November, 1604. But Akbar's end was drawing near. He was attacked by severe diarrhoea or dysentery in the autumn of 1605 and died on the 17th October.

6. Akbar's Religion

The sublimity of Akbar's conceptions, and the catholicity of his temperament and ideals, were moulded by various influences. Firstly, the influence of his heredity "endowed him with those qualities of head and heart that prepared him to receive the impress of his environments, and reflect it in the best possible way". In spite of their being conquerors, Tīmūr and his descendants were lovers of art and literature and rose above religious orthodoxy, largely owing to their contact with Sūfīsm. Akbar's mother, the daughter of a Persian scholar, sowed in his mind the seeds of toleration. Secondly, Akbar's early contact with Sūfīsm, during his stay in the court of Kābul, where many Sūfī saints had fled away from Persia under the pressure of Safavī persecution, and

subsequently the influence of his tutor, 'Abdul Latīf, impressed upon his mind the worth of liberal and sublime ideas and made him eager to "attain the ineffable bliss of direct contact with the Divine Reality". Lastly, his Rājput wives and his contact with Hinduism, and the reformation movements of his time, made an impression on his imaginative mind. Thus, "intelligent to an uncommon degree, with a mind alert and inquisitive, he was best fitted by birth, upbringing and association to feel most keenly those hankerings and that spiritual unrest which distinguished the century in which he lived. He was not only the child of his century, he was its best replica". It might be that Akbar's political aim of establishing an all-India Mughul Empire had some influence on his religious policy, as political factors largely influenced the religious settlement of his English contemporary, Queen Elizabeth. But there is no doubt that he had a yearning after truth and often "tempests of feeling had broken over Akbar's soul". We are told even by the hostile critic Badāūnī that "he would sit many a morning alone in prayer and melancholy, on a large flat stone of an old building near the (Fathpur) palace in a lonely spot with his head bent over his chest, and gathering the bliss of early hours". The conflicts of the different religious sects shocked his soul, and he devoted himself "to the evolution of a new religion, which would, he hoped, prove to be a synthesis of all the warring creeds and capable of uniting the discordant elements of his vast empire in one harmonious whole".

Akbar observed the external forms of the Sunnī faith until 1575, when his association with Shaikh Mubārak and his two sons, Faizī and Abul Fazl, produced a change in his views. He then caused a building to be constructed at Fathpur Sīkrī, called the *'Ibādat-Khāna* or the House of Worship, with a view to discussing philosophical and theological questions. He first summoned there the learned divines of Islam, but their discussions soon took the shape of "vulgar rancour, morbid orthodoxy and personal attacks" and they could not reply to some of the queries of Akbar to his satisfaction. In fact, their petty wranglings, of which Badāūnī gives a graphic picture, failed to satisfy his inquisitive soul, and led him to seek truth elsewhere. He therefore called to the *'Ibādat-Khāna* the wise men of different religions and sects, notably Hindu philosophers like Purushottama, Devī and some others; some Jaina teachers, the most prominent of them being Hari Vijaya Surī, Vijaya Sen Surī and Bhānuchandra Upādhāyya; and Parsī priests and Christian missionaries from Goa. He patiently attended to the arguments of the exponents of each faith, and

"went so far in relation to each religion that different people had reasonable grounds for affirming him to be a Zoroastrian, a Hindu, a Jaina, or a Christian". But he was not converted to any of these faiths, and there is no reason to exaggerate the influence of Christianity over him more than that of any other religion. It seems that being dissatisfied with the bitter controversies of the Muslim divines, he was prompted to study "other religions by means of discourses and debates, which eventually resulted in his eclecticism" and in the promulgation of the *Dīn-i-Ilāhī*. It was a new religion, "compounded", as the Jesuit writer Bartoli says, "out of various elements, taken partly from the Koran of Muhammad, partly from the scriptures of the Brahmans, and to a certain extent, as far as suited his purpose, from the Gospel of Christ". A firm believer in the policy of universal toleration, Akbar made no attempt to force his religion on others with the zeal of a convert or a religious fanatic, but appealed to the inner feelings of men.

Akbar's conception of universal toleration was indeed a noble one, and is a brilliant testimony to his national idealism. Relying on the evidence of Badāūni, an uncompromising critic of Akbar, and on the writings of the Jesuits, who must have been dissatisfied with the Emperor for their failure to convert him to their faith, Smith wrongly remarks that "the Divine Faith was a monument of Akbar's folly, not of his wisdom. The whole scheme was the outcome of ridiculous vanity, a monstrous growth of unrestrained autocracy". Von Noer, the German historian of Akbar, gives a correct estimate of the Divine Faith when he writes: "Badaoni certainly takes every opportunity of raking up the notion of Akbar's apotheosis for the purpose of renewing attacks upon the great emperor. He, however, was never in intimate relation to the Dīn-i-Ilāhī; he repeats his misconceptions current among the populace, marred and alloyed by popular modes of perception. Akbar might justly have contemplated the acts of his reign with legitimate pride, but many incidents of his life prove him to have been among the most modest of men. It was the people who made a God of the man who was the founder and head of an order at once political, philosophic and religious. One of his creations will assure to him for all time a pre-eminent place among the benefactors of humanity—greatness and universal tolerance in matters of religion."

Akbar has been charged by Badāūnī, and the Jesuit writers, with having renounced Islam in his later years. It is, of course, true that, with a view to commanding the "indivisible allegiance of his subjects", Akbar sought to check the undue influence of the

Ulemas, who, like the Popes in medieval Europe, exerted "a parallel claim to the obedience of the people"; and proceeded, step by step, to establish his position as the supreme head of the Church (*Imām-i-'Ādil*). Thus in June, 1579, he removed the chief preacher at Fathpur Sīkrī and read the *Khutba* in his own name, and in September, 1579, he issued the so-called Infallibility Decree, which made him the supreme arbiter in matters of religion. This must have caused profound resentment among the *Ulemas* and their supporters, but Akbar remained fearless. "He did not mean to assume the spiritual leadership of the nation without having spiritual attainments. . . . From start to finish, from ascending the pulpit at Fathpur Sīkrī to the propagation of *Dīn-i-Ilāhī*, Akbar was intensely sincere." It is unfair to denounce a man of such rational and liberal sentiments as having contempt for other religions or being an enemy of any of these. He never denied the authority of the Quran, not even in the so-called Infallibility Decree. His ideal was a grand synthesis of all that he considered to be the best in different religions—an ideal essentially national, for which he is justly entitled to the gratitude of posterity.

7. Personality of Akbar

An intrepid soldier, a benevolent and wise ruler, a man of enlightened ideas, and a sound judge of character, Akbar occupies a unique position in the history of India. We know from Abul Fazl, and even from the hostile critic Badāūnī, that he had a commanding personality and looked every inch a king. Jahāngīr remarks in his *Memoirs* that his father "in his actions and movements was not like the people of the world, and the glory of God manifested itself in him". Like other princes of the house of Tīmūr, Akbar was endowed with remarkable courage and uncommon physical strength. He was fearless in the chase as well as in the fields of battle, and, "like Alexander of Macedon, was always ready to risk his life, regardless of political consequences". He often plunged his horse into the full-flooded rivers during the rainy season and safely crossed over to the other side. Though a mighty conqueror, he did not usually indulge in cruelty for its own sake. Affectionate towards his relatives, he was not revengeful without cause, and his behaviour towards his brother, Hakīm, shows that he could pardon a repentant rebel. On some rare occasions his temper got the upper hand and then the culprits were summarily dealt with, as is shown by his behaviour towards his maternal uncle, Mu'azzam, and his foster-brother, Ādam Khān. But he usually maintained perfect

self-control. His manners were exceedingly charming and his address pleasant, for which he has been highly praised by all who came in contact with him. He was able to win the love and reverence of his subjects, who considered the Ruler of Delhi to be the Lord of the Universe. Extremely moderate in his diet, he was fond of fruit and had little liking for meat, which he ceased to take altogether in his later years.

Though Akbar probably did not learn how to read and write,[1] he was not uncultured. Possessed of a fine literary taste, a profound intellectual curiosity and a marvellous memory, he took interest in the different branches of learning, such as philosophy, theology, history, and politics. He maintained a library full of books on various subjects, and was fond of the society of scholars, poets and philosophers, who read books to him aloud, and thus enabled him to be conversant with Sūfī, Christian, Zoroastrian, Hindu and Jaina literature. Smith writes that "anybody who heard him arguing with acuteness and lucidity on a subject of debate would have credited him with wide literary knowledge and profound erudition and never would have suspected him of illiteracy". He possessed also a fair taste for art, architecture and mechanical works, and is credited with many inventions and improvements in the manufacture of matchlocks. Gifted with indomitable energy and indefatigable industry, he erected a vast administrative machinery on a comprehensive plan, which will be described in a subsequent chapter. He looked, as we know from the *Āīn-i-Akbarī*, "upon the smallest details as mirrors capable of reflecting a comprehensive outline".

Though ambitious of territorial conquests, through which the limits of the Mughul Empire were extended almost to the furthest limits of Northern India, Akbar was not a selfish and unbridled autocrat. He did not ignore the feelings of the conquered and trample on their rights and privileges with an eye only to self-interest. His ideal of kingship was high. "Upon the conduct of the monarch," said he, "depends the efficiency of any course of action. His gratitude to his Lord, therefore, should be shown in his just government and due recognition of merit; that of his people in obedience and praises." Endowed with the farsightedness of a genius, he built the political structure of the Mughul Empire, and its administrative system, on the co-operation and goodwill of all his subjects. He truly realised the unsoundness of ill-treating the Hindus, who formed the overwhelming majority of

[1] Some writers are now trying to prove Akbar's literacy. *Vide Liberty*, 30th December, 1931, and *Indian Historical Quarterly*, December 1940.

the population, or of relegating them permanently to a position of inequality and humiliation. This shows the transcendental ability of Akbar as a statesman. He not only meted out fair treatment to the Hindus and appointed them to high posts, as Sher Shāh and his successors had done, but also tried to remove all invidious distinctions between the Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus he abolished the pilgrim tax in the eighth year and the *jizya* in the ninth year of his reign, and inaugurated a policy of universal toleration. In fact, he chalked out a rational path for anyone who would aspire to the position of a national ruler of India.

Akbar tried to introduce humane social reforms. He was a patron of art and literature. All this will be described in subsequent chapters. From all points of view his reign forms one of the most brilliant periods in the history of India. Akbar, remarks Smith, "was a born king of men, with a rightful claim to be one :the mightiest sovereigns known to history. That claim rests securely on the basis of his extraordinary natural gifts, his original ideas, and his magnificent achievements".

CHAPTER III

JAHĀNGĪR AND SHĀH JAHĀN

1. Jahāngīr

A WEEK after Akbar's death, Salīm succeeded to the throne at Āgra at the age of thirty-six and assumed the title of Nūr-ud-dīn Muhammad Jahāngīr Pādshāh Ghāzī. Though fond of pleasure he was not absolutely devoid of military ambition, and dreamt of conquering Transoxiana, the seat of government of the early Tīmūrids. Soon after his accession, he tried, in the words of Asad, "to win the hearts of all the people" by various measures. He granted a general amnesty to his opponents, released prisoners, set up the famous chain of justice between the Shāhburjī in the fort of Āgra and a stone pillar fixed on the banks of the Jumnā, and promulgated twelve edicts, which were ordered to be observed as rules of conduct in his kingdom:—

1. Prohibition of cesses (*zakāt*).
2. Regulations about highway robbery and theft.
3. Free inheritance of property of deceased persons.
4. Prohibition of the sale of wine and of all kinds of intoxicating liquor.
5. Prohibition of seizure of houses and of cutting off the noses and ears of criminals.
6. Prohibition of forcible seizure of property (*Ghasbi*).
7. Building of hospitals and appointment of physicians to attend the sick.
8. Prohibition of the slaughter of animals on certain days.
9. Respect paid to Sunday.
10. General confirmation of *mansabs* and *jāgīrs*.
11. Confirmation of *aimā*[1] lands.
12. Amnesty to all prisoners in forts and in prisons of every kind.

These edicts do not seem to have had very great practical effect.

The few changes that Jahāngīr now effected in the offices of the State were intended to secure him a band of supporters. He

[1] Described in the *Waqiāt-i-Jahāngīrī* as "lands devoted to the purposes of prayer and praise".

rewarded Bīr Singh Bundelā, the murderer of Abul Fazl, with the dignity of a commander of 3,000 horse, while 'Abdur Rahamān, the son of the victim, and Mahā Singh, son of Mān Singh, were elevated only to the rank of a commander of 2,000. Mīrzā Ghiyās Beg, a Persian adventurer and father of Nūr Jahān, who was destined to be famous under the title of I'timād-ud-daulah, was raised to the rank of a commander of 1,500.

The "early pleasant dreams" of Jahāngīr were soon rudely disturbed by the rebellion of his eldest son, Khusrav, whose relations with his father had been far from friendly since the closing years of Akbar's reign. Enjoying the kindness and favour of his grandfather, Khusrav was the most popular prince in the Empire, having many influential supporters like his maternal uncle, Mān Singh, and his father-in-law, Khān-i-A'zam 'Azīz Koka, foster-brother of Akbar. Five months after Jahāngīr's accession, he left Āgra, fled to the Punjab and rose in rebellion. Jahāngīr marched without delay against his son with a large army. He was so greatly perturbed that he even forgot to take his daily dose of opium on the first morning of his march. The Prince's troops were easily defeated by the imperial forces near Jullundur and he was captured with his principal followers, Husain Beg and 'Abdul 'Azīz, while attempting to cross the Chenāb with a view to proceeding to Kābul. He was brought before his father with "his hands bound and a chain on his leg" in open *darbār*, and after being severely reproached was ordered to be imprisoned. His supporters were subjected to cruel punishments.[1] The captive Prince was destined to suffer more till he met his doom in 1622. Khusrav and his nephew, Dārā Shukoh, are two pathetic figures in Mughul history.

The fifth Sikh Guru, Arjan, was sentenced to death,[2] and all his property was confiscated by the Emperor. Apparently the charge against him was that he had helped the rebel prince Khusrav with a sum of money, and some writers believe that the Guru suffered the "penalty for high treason and contumacy" But Jahāngīr's own *Memoirs* make it clear that the Emperor was not guided by purely political considerations. The unfortunate prince whom the Guru helped was, in the words of Terry, "a gentleman of a very lovely presence and fine carriage, exceedingly beloved of the common people . . . the very love and delight

[1] Jahāngīr himself writes: "I gave Khusrav into custody and I ordered these two villains (Husain Beg and 'Abdul 'Azīz) to be enclosed in the skins of a cow and an ass, and to be placed on asses, face to the tail, and so to be paraded round the city." Elliot, Vol. VI, p. 300.

[2] His tomb is situated just outside the Fort of Lahore.

of them all".[1] The Guru's conduct may have been due to his charitable and holy disposition, and need not indicate any hostile intention towards the Emperor personally. The Guru himself justified his action on the grounds of his *dharma* and gratitude for the past favours of Akbar "and not because he was in opposition" to the Emperor Jahāngīr. The execution of the Sikh divine was an impolitic step on the part of Jahāngīr, as it estranged the Sikhs, till then a peace-loving community, and turned them into foes of the Empire.

In May, 1611, Jahāngīr married Nūr Jahān, originally known as Mihr-un-nisa, who considerably influenced his career and reign. Modern researches have discarded the many romantic legends about Mihr-un-nisa's birth and early life and have proved the reliability of the brief account of Mu'tamīd Khān, the author of *Iqbāl-Nāmā-i-Jahāngīrī*. According to it, Mihr-un-nisa was the daughter of a Persian immigrant, Mīrzā Ghiyās Beg, who came to India with his children and wife in the reign of Akbar. She was born on the way to India at Qandahār. Her father rose to high positions during the reigns of Akbar and his son. She was married, at the age of seventeen, to 'Ālī Qulī Beg Istajhī, another Persian adventurer, who in the beginning of Jahāngīr's reign received the *jāgīr* of Burdwān in Bengal and the title of Sher-afghān. When Jahāngīr heard that Sher-afghān had grown "insubordinate and disposed to rebellions", he sent in A.D. 1607 his foster-brother, Qutb-ud-dīn, the new governor of Bengal, who was to the Emperor "in the place of a dear son, a kind brother, and a congenial friend", to chastise him. An affray took place between Sher-afghān and Qutb-ud-dīn at Burdwān, in course of which the latter was killed. Sher-afghān was, in his turn, hacked to pieces by the followers of Qutb-ud-dīn, and Mihr-un-nisa was taken to the court with her young daughter. After four years, Mihr-un-nisa's charming "appearance caught the king's far-seeing eye and so captivated him" that he married her, and made her his chief queen. The Emperor, who styled himself Nūr-ud-dīn, conferred on his new consort the title of Nūr Mahal (Light of the Palace), which was soon changed to Nūr Jahān (Light of the World). It is sometimes said that Jahāngīr had been in love with Mihr-un-nisa "when she was still a maiden, during the lifetime of Akbar", and that his infatuation for her cost Sher-afghān his life. The truth of this opinion has recently been questioned on the ground that the contemporary Indian historians, and some

[1] Terry, *Voyage to East India*, p. 411. Terry, Sir Thomas Roe's chaplain, met Khusrav several times.

European travellers, are silent about it and it was invented by later writers. But the cause of Mihr-un-nisa being brought to the court, and not to her father, who held an important post in the Empire, has not been explained. That Jahāngīr was not above the habit of having secret love affairs with the ladies of the court is proved by the case of Ānarkalī, for whom he raised in 1615 a beautiful marble tomb[1] at Lahore, bearing the passionate inscription: "Ah! Could I behold the face of my beloved once more, I would thank God until the day of resurrection."

Nūr Jahān was indeed possessed of exquisite beauty, a fine taste for Persian literature, poetry and arts, "a piercing intellect, a versatile temper, and sound common sense". But the most dominating trait of her character was her inordinate ambition, which led her to establish an unlimited ascendancy over her husband. Her father, I'timād-ud-daulāh, and brother, Āsaf Khān, became prominent nobles of the court, and she further strengthened her position by marrying her daughter by her first husband to Jahāngīr's youngest son, Prince Shahryār.

The early part of Jahāngīr's reign witnessed some important military successes. Attention was first directed towards Bengal, the annexation of which had not yet put an end to the Afghān opposition there. The frequent change of governors in Bengal encouraged the local Afghāns to rebel under 'Usmān Khān during the governorship of Islām Khān, who was, however, a capable man and took prompt measures to suppress the rebellion. The Afghāns were defeated by the imperialists on the 12th March, 1612, and their leader, 'Usmān Khān, died from the effect of a severe wound in the head. The political power of the Afghāns, so long opposed to the Mughuls, came to an end, and Jahāngīr's conciliatory policy made them henceforth friendly to the Empire.

The most distinguished triumph of Mughul imperialism during the reign of Jahāngīr was its victory over the Rājputs of Mewār, who had so long defied its might. Amar Singh of Mewār was devoid of the unflinching resolution of Pratāp, and the policy of Prince Khurram, the third son of Jahāngīr, compelled him to negotiate for peace. The Rānā and his son Karan submitted to the Mughuls and recognised the suzerainty of the Empire. The Rānā himself was exempted from personal attendance at the imperial court, and no princess of his family was ever taken to the imperial harem. As Jahāngīr himself observed: "The real point was that as Rānā Amar Singh and his fathers, proud in the strength of their hilly

[1] It became the Church of St. James from 1857 to 1887 and is now the Record Office of the Punjab Government.

country and their abodes, had never seen or obeyed any of the Kings of Hindustān, this should be brought about in my reign." Jahāngīr subsequently placed two life-size marble statues of the Rānā and his son in the garden of his palace at Āgra. By granting generous terms to Mewār and adopting a conciliatory policy towards it, Jahāngīr secured its loyalty for the Mughul Empire till Aurangzeb's policy alienated Rānā Rāj Singh.

In the Deccan, Jahāngīr pursued the forward policy of his father and a desultory war dragged on throughout his reign against the kingdom of Ahmadnagar. Complete success of the Mughul arms over the forces of Ahmadnagar was not possible, owing partly to the strength of the Deccan kingdom and partly to the weak conduct of the war by the imperial troops. The kingdom of Ahmadnagar was then ably served by its Abyssinian minister, Malik 'Ambar, a born leader of men and one of the greatest statesmen that Medieval India produced. His reorganisation of the revenue system of the kingdom on sound lines contributed to its financial stability, and his training of the soldiers, mostly Marāthas, in the guerrilla method of warfare enabled them to cope successfully with the imperialists. Mu'tamīd Khān, the Mughul court-chronicler, who could not have been biased towards Malik 'Ambar, thus describes him: "This 'Ambar was a slave, but an able man. In warfare, in command, in sound judgment, and in administration, he had no rival or equal. He well understood the predatory warfare, which in the language of the Dakhin is called *bargī-giri*. He kept down the turbulent spirits of that country, and maintained his exalted position to the end of his life and closed his career in honour. History records no other instance of an Abyssinian slave arriving at such eminence." The activities of the imperial troops were, on the other hand, greatly hampered by continual dissensions among the commanders. The nominal command of the campaigns was given first to Prince Parwez and subsequently to Prince Khurram. But 'Abdur Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān, and some other chief nobles, really controlled all affairs. They occupied their time more in mutual quarrels than in fighting against the Deccanis. Only a partial success was gained by the Mughuls in A.D. 1616, when Prince Khurram captured Ahmadnagar and some other strongholds. For this victory Khurram was rewarded by his father with the title of Shāh Jahān (King of the World). He received various gifts, and was elevated to the rank of 30,000 *zāt* and 20,000 *sawār*. But the victory of the Mughuls over Ahmadnagar was more apparent than real. The Deccan was far from being completely conquered by them. It has been justly remarked that "nothing could conceal the stern

reality that the expenditure of millions of rupees and thousands of lives had not advanced the Mughul frontier a single line beyond the frontier of 1605".

A notable military success of Jahāngīr's reign was the capture of the strong fortress of Kāngra in the hills of the north-eastern Punjab on the 16th November, 1620. But this event, in which Jahāngīr found cause for exultation, was quickly followed by disasters and rebellions which had no end till he closed his eyes for ever.

The first serious disaster for the Empire was the loss of Qandahār, which had long been a source of friction between the Mughuls and the Persians. Deceiving the Mughul officers by gifts and friendly professions, Shāh 'Abbās (1587–1629), one of the greatest rulers of Asia in his time, took advantage of internal disorders in the Empire to besiege Qandahār in 1621, and finally took it in June, 1622. The huge preparations of Jahāngīr for the recapture of Qandahār were in vain, as his son Shāh Jahān, whom he ordered to lead the expedition, apprehending that his absence from the capital would be utilised by Nūr Jahān to prejudice his claims to the throne, and to strengthen those of her son-in-law, Shahryār, did not move. Alienated by the intrigues of Nūr Jahān, Shāh Jahān soon rose in rebellion against his father, as the Emperor had not the courage or power to restrain the Empress. Placed on the horns of a dilemma—facing the Persian pressure on the north-west and the defection of Shāh Jahān within the heart of the Empire—Jahāngīr was in sore straits. His attention and efforts had soon to be diverted towards the suppression of the danger at home.

Shāh Jahān, joined by the aged officer 'Abdur Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān, at first intended to march on Āgra, but an imperial army under the nominal command of Prince Parwez and with Mahābat Khān as its real leader, completely defeated him at Balochpur, south of Delhi, in 1623. He was chased from province to province and met with repeated reverses. He first proceeded to the Deccan, whence he was driven to Bengal. But unable to maintain his hold there, he returned to the Deccan and for a few years wandered about seeking the alliance of Malik 'Ambar and others. He was finally reconciled to his father in 1625. His sons, Dārā Shukoh and Aurangzeb, were sent to the imperial court, probably to serve as hostages for his good behaviour; and he retired to Nāsik with his wife, Mumtāz Mahal, a niece of Nūr Jahān, and his youngest son, Murād. Thus ended the futile rebellion of Shāh Jahān, with no gain for him but with ample damage to the Empire.

An Afghān by birth, Mahābat Khān held only a *mansab* of 500 in the beginning of Jahāngīr's reign. Being rapidly promoted to higher ranks, he rendered conspicuous services to the Emperor, especially in suppressing the rebellion of Shāh Jahān. But his success excited the jealousy of Nūr Jahān and her brother, Āsaf Khān, and the queen's hostility drove him to rebellion. By a bold *coup de main* he made Jahāngīr a prisoner on the bank of the river Jhelum, while the Emperor was on his way to Kābul. Nūr Jahān managed to escape, but all her attempts to rescue her husband by force having failed, she joined him in confinement. She and her husband were finally able, by outwitting Mahābat Khān, to effect their escape to Rohtās, where the partisans of Jahāngīr had collected a large force. Mahābat Khān ultimately ran away to Shāh Jahān and made peace with him. But Nūr Jahān's triumph was short-lived, for the Emperor died on the 28th October, 1627. His body was buried in a beautiful tomb at Shāhdara, on the banks of the Rāvī.

Jahāngīr is a complex personality in Indian history. Terry writes of him: "Now for the disposition of that King it ever seemed unto me to be composed of extremes: for sometimes he was cruel and at other times he would seem to be exceedingly fair and gentle." Beveridge remarks: "Jahāngīr was indeed a strange mixture. The man who could stand by and see men flayed alive . . . could yet be a lover of justice and could spend his Thursday evenings in holding high converse. . . . He could procure the murder of Abul Fazl and avow the fact without remorse, and also pity the royal elephants because they shivered in winter when they sprinkled themselves with cold water. . . . One good trait in Jahāngīr was his hearty enjoyment of nature and his love of flowers." In the opinion of the Emperor's latest biographer, he was "a sensible, kind-hearted man, with strong family affections and unstinted generosity to all, with a burning hatred of oppression and a passion for justice. On a few occasions in his career as prince and emperor, he was betrayed, not without provocation, by fits of wrath into individual acts of cruelty. But, as a rule, he was remarkable for humanity, affability and an open mind". Francis Gladwin has also observed that "from the beginning to the end of his reign, Jahāngīr's disposition towards his subjects appears to have been invariably humane and considerate". He removed some vexatious transit duties and taxes and made an attempt to prohibit traffic in eunuchs. He had a strong sense of justice. "The first order that I gave," he writes, "was for fastening up the Chain of Justice." This chain,

bearing sixty bells, could be shaken by the humblest of his subjects to bring their grievances to his notice. He imposed penalties without any consideration for the rank of the accused. Thus on passing the capital sentence on an influential murderer, he observed: "God forbid that in such affairs I should consider princes, and far less that I should consider Amīrs." His reign saw the beginning of a new intercourse between Europe and India.

Possessed of a fine aesthetic taste, and himself a painter, Jahāngīr was a patron of art and literature and a lover of nature. His *Tūzuk* (Memoirs) is a brilliant proof of his literary attainments. But he was given to excessive intemperance, which gradually spoiled the finer aspects of his character and was responsible for the inconsistency of his temper. Jahāngīr's attitude towards religion was not so rational as that of his father, but he was not an eclectic or a Christian at heart. With a sincere belief in God, he did not remain satisfied with mere dogmas of any particular creed but was a deist. He loved to converse with Hindu or Muslim saints, and Christian preachers, and valued religious pictures, notably of Christians, but he did not accept the practices or rites of the Hindus, the Zoroastrians or the Christians.

2. Shāh Jahān

A. The Struggle for the Throne

The death of Jahāngīr was followed by a short period of struggle for succession to the throne. Shāh Jahān was still in the Deccan when his father died in October, 1627, and though two of his brothers, Khusrav and Parwez, had already expired, there was another, Prince Shahryār, with a position of advantage in the north. At the instance of his mother-in-law, Nūr Jahān, Shahryār lost no time in proclaiming himself Emperor in Lahore. But Shāh Jahān's cause was ably served by Āsaf Khān, father of Mumtāz Mahal. With much alertness, Āsaf Khān sent a message to Shāh Jahān asking him to come to the north. At the same time, with a view to satisfying the people of the capital, he installed Prince Dāwar Bakhsh, son of the late Prince Khusrav, on the throne as a stop-gap Emperor, pending the arrival of Shāh Jahān. Having won over to his side the *Mīr Bakhshi*, Irādat Khān, Āsaf Khān marched to Lahore, defeated the troops of Shahryār, made him a prisoner and blinded him. Shāh Jahān hurried to Āgra from the Deccan and was proclaimed Emperor in the metropolis in February, 1628, under the lofty title of 'Abul Muzaffar Shihāb-ud-dīn

Muhammad Sāhib-i-qirān II, Shāh Jahān Pādshāh Ghāzī. Soon after this, Prince Dāwar Bakhsh, whom the contemporary chronicler has aptly described as a "sacrificial lamb", was removed from the throne and consigned to prison, but he was subsequently released and went to reside in Persia as a pensioner of its Shāh. Shāh Jahān managed to remove all his possible rivals "out of the world". He lived to see two of his sons executed, a third driven out of the country. He himself spent his last days as a captive.

B. Rebellions

For the time being, however, everything went in the Emperor's favour. He began his reign with profound optimism and success. In recognition of their services, Āsaf Khān and Mahābat Khān were promoted to high offices. The former was made the Wazīr of the Empire and the latter governor of Ajmer. The Emperor easily suppressed two rebellions—one of Jujhār Singh, a Bundelā chief, son of Bīr Singh Bundelā, and the other of a powerful Afghān noble named Khān Jahān Lodī, an ex-viceroy of the Deccan—which broke out in the first and the second year of his reign respectively. The Bundelā chief was quickly overpowered and retreated into the mountains, whence, however, he continued to create trouble for the Emperor till 1634. Ultimately he was defeated by the imperialists, who forced him to leave his country, and he was killed on the way in a chance skirmish with the Gonds. More formidable than the Bundelā rising was the rebellion of Khān Jahān Lodī, who had allied himself with Nizām-ul-mulk, the last of the Nizām Shāhī rulers of Ahmadnagar; and had some Marātha and Rājput supporters. The success of his efforts, which meant the "carrying out of the traditional hostility of the Afghān chiefs to the Mughul dynasty", would have deprived the Empire of its southern provinces. But Shāh Jahān, having fully realised the gravity of the situation, sent a body of efficient troops to suppress the rebellion. Chased from place to place, deserted by his allies and having lost his friends and relations in battle, the Afghān chief fought desperately against the imperialists for three years but was ultimately defeated at Tāl Sehonda, north of Kālinjar, and cut to pieces with his sons, 'Azīz and Āimal, in the fourth year.

C. Treatment of the Portuguese and Capture of Hugli

The Portuguese had established themselves above Sātgāon in Bengal in or about A.D. 1579 on the strength of an imperial *firman*,

and had gradually strengthened their position by the erection of large buildings round about Hugli, which became consequently more important than Sātgāon from the commercial point of view. But far from remaining satisfied with peaceful commercial pursuits, they gave offence to Shāh Jāhan by some objectionable practices. They not only exacted heavy duties from the Indian traders, especially on tobacco (which had become by that time an important article of trade), at the cost of the revenues of the State, but also became arrogant enough to begin the abominable and cruel practice of slave trading, for which they kidnapped many orphan Hindu or Muslim children, whom they converted to Christianity. Their audacity rose so high that they captured two slave girls of Mumtāz Mahal's. This must have been sufficient to incense the Mughul Emperor. The conversion of Indians to Christianity by some of the Jesuit missionaries added to his resentment against the Portuguese. After his accession to the throne, Shāh Jahān appointed Kāsīm 'Ālī Khān governor of Bengal and charged him with the duty of punishing the Portuguese. Hugli was accordingly besieged by a large army, under the command of Kāsīm 'Ālī Khān's son, on the 24th June, 1632, and was captured after three months. Many of the Portuguese, as we know from the court-chronicler, 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī, were killed and a large number of them were taken as prisoners to Āgra, where they suffered terribly.

D. Famine in the Deccan and Gujarāt, 1630–1632

In the fourth and fifth years of the reign of Shāh Jahān an appalling famine of the most severe type desolated the Deccan and Gujarāt. The horrors of this terrible calamity have been thus described by 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī: "The inhabitants of these two countries were reduced to the direst extremity. Life was offered for a loaf, but none would buy; rank was to be sold for a cake, but none cared for it; the ever-bounteous hand was stretched out to beg for food; and the feet which had always trodden the way of contentment walked about only in search of sustenance. For a long time dog's flesh was sold for goat's flesh, and the pounded bones of the dead were mixed with flour and sold. When this was discovered, the sellers were brought to justice. Destitution at length reached such a pitch that men began to devour each other, and the flesh of a son was preferred to his love. The numbers of the dying caused obstructions in the roads, and every man whose dire sufferings did not terminate in deąth and who retained the power to move wandered off to the towns and villages of other

countries." An English merchant-traveller, Peter Mundy, who went on business from Surāt to Āgra and Patnā and came back while the famine was raging, has also left a detailed account of its horrors.

E. The North-West Frontier Policy

Shāh Jahān was determined to recover the important province of Qandahār, without which the Mughul position on the north-west frontier remained comparatively weak. By skilful negotiations he seduced 'Ālī Mardān Khān, the Persian governor of Qandahār, from his loyalty to the Shāh and persuaded him to surrender the fortress to the Mughuls. 'Ālī Mardān entered the Mughul imperial service and was rewarded with money and honour. The action of 'Ālī Mardān Khān deprived Persia of Qandahār, but the Mughuls could not retain it long. The Persians under their energetic ruler, Shāh 'Abbās II, made preparations in August, 1648, with a view to attacking Qandahār during winter, when the snowfall would make it difficult for the Mughuls to bring reinforcements from India. The courtiers of Shāh Jahān unwisely advised him to postpone the work of opposing the Persians till the season was over. "The natural consequence of neglecting an enemy followed. The Persian King triumphed over the depth of winter, his lack of provisions, and other difficulties, on which the courtiers of Shāh Jahān had built their hopes," and besieged Qandahār on the 16th December, 1648. The Mughul garrison ultimately capitulated on the 11th February, A.D. 1649, owing largely to the weakness of Daulat Khān, the incapable Mughul governor of Qandahār. Early in May, Prince Aurangzeb, with the chief minister, Sa'dullah Khān, was deputed to make an attempt to recover Qandahār, and he attacked it on the 16th of that month. But this attempt failed before the superior military preparations and skill of the Persians. Shāh Jahān, however, would not abandon his design of recapturing Qandahār. After three years' preparations the Emperor sent there a powerful expeditionary army with a siege-train, again under Aurangzeb and Sa'dullah Khān, while he himself remained encamped at Kābul to make arrangements for supplies of provisions and munitions of war. The imperial commanders invested Qandahār on the 2nd May, 1652. They had received strict instructions from their master not to deliver an assault on the fortress without making a breach, but they failed to effect it with their inefficient gunnery in the face of the superior artillery of the Persians. Thus the Mughul troops had no success this time also, and Shāh Jahān had to order the abandonment of the siege. A third attempt made

by the Emperor's eldest and favourite son, Dārā Shukoh (now exalted with the title of "*Shāh Buland Iqbāl*" or "King of Lofty Fortune"), in the following year, proved as unlucky as that of his brother. Qandahār was lost to the Mughuls for good, though the campaigns undertaken to recover it during the reign of Shāh Jahān cost no less than twelve crores of rupees, that is, more than half of the annual income of the State, besides valuable lives. Further, the repeated failures of the Mughul troops before Qandahār considerably affected the prestige of the Empire.

F. The Central Asian Policy

The Central Asian adventures of the Mughuls also ended in disasters. Shāh Jahān, like his father and grandfather, dreamt of reconquering the old territories of his ancestors in Central Asia. "Ever since the beginning of his reign," writes 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī, "the Emperor's heart had been set upon the conquest of Balkh and Badakhshān, which were hereditary territories of his house, and the keys to the acquisition of Samarqānd, the home and capital of his great ancestor Tīmūr." But the difficulties of mobilising a large army through the lofty ranges of the Hindukush were great, and the utility of the enterprise for the Mughul Empire in India was very doubtful. Shāh Jahān, however, did not consider this. "The prosperity of his reign and the flattery of his courtiers had turned his head and he was dreaming the vainest of vain dreams." In 1646, circumstances being favourable owing to the outbreak of a civil war in the ruling house of the Oxus region, Prince Murād and 'Ālī Mardān occupied Balkh and Badakhshān, which lay hemmed in between the Hindukush and the Oxus. But to consolidate these conquests became impossible. Sick of the uncongenial climate of Balkh and other difficulties, Prince Murād came back to India against the desire of his father, for which he was disgraced. The *wazīr*, Sa'dullah Khān, was soon sent to Balkh to set things right. In the next year the Emperor, determined not to give up his conquests, dispatched Aurangzeb to Balkh with a large army. But the Uzbegs now organised a national resistance against the Mughuls in the face of which Aurangzeb, in spite of his sincere and earnest efforts, could achieve nothing and had to retreat to India after suffering terrible hardships. The Central Asian campaigns cost the Mughul Empire immense loss of men and money. As Sir J. N. Sarkar remarks: "Thus ended Shāh Jahān's fatuous war in Balkh—a war in which the Indian treasury spent four krores of rupees in two years and realised from the

conquered country a revenue of 22½ lakhs only. Not an inch of territory was annexed, no dynasty changed, and no enemy replaced by an ally on the throne of Balkh. The grain stored in the Balkh fort, worth five lakhs, and the provisions in other forts as well, were all abandoned to the Bukhāriāns, besides Rs. 50,000 in cash presented to Nazar Muhammad's grandsons and Rs. 22,500 to envoys. Five hundred soldiers fell in battle and ten times that number (including camp-followers) were slain by cold and snow on the mountains. Such is the terrible price that aggressive imperialism makes India pay for wars across the north-western frontier."

G. Shāh Jahān and the Deccan States

Shāh Jahān resumed the traditional policy of expansion in the south, the whole of which had not been, as we have already noted, thoroughly subdued by Akbar. Akbar could only conquer Khāndesh and annex a portion of Berar. Jahāngīr's attempt to conquer Ahmadnagar was successfully checked by its able minister, Malik 'Ambar. Bijāpur and Golkundā continued to enjoy independence. Much was still left to be accomplished before Mughul imperialism could triumph completely over the Peninsula.

The Nizām Shāhī kingdom of Ahmadnagar, because of its proximity to the Mughul frontier in the south, was the first to feel the weight of Mughul arms. After the death of Malik 'Ambar, the saviour of Ahmadnagar from Mughul attack during the reign of Jahāngīr, in 1626, the kingdom was in a moribund condition. Internal dissensions between the Sultān and his minister, Fateh Khān, the unworthy son of the noble Abyssinian Malik 'Ambar, brought the kingdom within the clutches of the Mughuls in the course of a few years. In 1630 the Mughuls failed to capture Parenda, a strong fortress belonging to Ahmadnagar. But Fateh Khān, dissatisfied with Sultān Nizām-ul-mulk, entered into negotiations with the Mughul Emperor and at the suggestion of the latter secretly made away with his master. To perpetuate his own influence he placed on the throne Nizām-ul-mulk's son, Husain Shāh, a boy only ten years old. He was not at all sincere in his friendship with the Mughuls. When the Mughuls besieged the fortress of Daulatābād in 1631, he at first went against the imperialists but was soon won over by them with a bribe of ten and a half lacs of rupees, and surrendered the fortress. Thus the same ignoble means which had given Asīrgarh to the Mughuls were used by them also to secure Daulatābād. Ahmadnagar was annexed to the Mughul Empire in A.D. 1633, and the

nominal king, Husain Shāh, was consigned to life-long imprisonment in the fort of Gwālior. The dynasty of the Nizām Shāhīs thus came to an end, though an unsuccessful attempt to revive it was made in 1635 by Shāhjī, father of the celebrated Shivājī. As a reward for his help to the Mughuls, Fateh Khān was enrolled in the imperial service at a liberal salary.

The independence of the Shiah States of Golkundā and Bijāpur was highly offensive to the imperialistic and religious zeal of Shāh Jahān. The encroachments of the imperial troops on their territories had already begun in 1629 and 1631 respectively. In the year 1635, when the rulers of those two States secretly helped Shāhjī, who made an attempt to set up a Nizām Shāhī boy as the nominal Sultān of the now defunct kingdom of Admadnagar, the Mughul Emperor called upon them to acknowledge his suzerainty, to send tribute regularly, and to abstain from helping Shāhjī. He marched in person to the Deccan to enforce his demands and on reaching Daulatābād on 21st February, 1636, made vigorous preparations to attack the Deccan States. Overawed by these, 'Abdullah Shāh, Sultān of Golkundā, acknowledged the suzerainty of Shāh Jahān by complying with all the demands of the latter, such as paying an annual tribute to the Emperor, and to striking coins, and having the *Khutba* read, in his name.

But the 'Ādil Shāh of Bijāpur refused to submit to the imperial behest and made a bold stand to defend his rights. Three Mughul armies then attacked his kingdom from three sides—one, under Khān-i-Daurān, from Bīdar in the north-east, another, under Khān Jahān, through Sholāpur in the west, and the third, under Khān-i-Zamān, by way of Indāpur in the north-west. Though by resorting to the time-honoured expedients of cutting off the supplies of the enemy and poisoning the wells, the Bijāpur soldiers bravely defended the capital city, the rest of their kingdom was devastated by the Mughuls. Thus the Sultān was compelled to sue for peace, which was concluded in May, 1636. He acknowledged the suzerainty of the Mughul Emperor, agreed to pay tribute to him, and was required not to molest the kingdom of Golkundā, which was now a dependency of the Emperor. Besides being allowed to hold his ancestral kingdom, the Sultān got portions of the territory of the Ahmadnagar kingdom, the rest of which was absorbed into the Mughul Empire. Both the parties agreed not to suborn their respective officers, and the Sultān was not to assist, or give shelter to, Shāhjī. "Thus after forty years of strife (1595–1636)," writes Sir J. N. Sarkar, "the affairs of the Deccan were at last settled. The position of the Emperor was

asserted beyond challenge, his boundaries clearly defined, and his suzerainty over the southern kingdoms formally established." The Emperor left the Deccan on the 11th July, 1636, and sent his third son, Aurangzeb, then a youth of eighteen, as viceroy of the Mughul Deccan. It was then a fairly extensive territory, comprising four provinces, Khāndesh, Berar, Telingāna, and Daulatābād, and estimated to yield an income of five crores of rupees a year. It contained sixty-four hill forts, some of which were still in the possession of Shāhjī and other hostile chiefs.

The young viceroy engaged himself assiduously in suppressing the enemies of the Empire. He captured the district of Bāglāna, lying between Khāndesh and the Surāt coast, and compelled Shāhjī to submit to him and surrender certain forts. In 1637 he went to Āgra to marry Dilras Bānu Begam, daughter of Shāh Nawāz Khān of the Persian royal family, then employed as a Mughul officer. But Aurangzeb was much embarrassed in his Deccan administration for lack of finance and also by the influence of a hostile party under his brother, Dārā Shukoh. In 1644 he proceeded to Āgra to see his favourite sister, Jahānārā, who had been severely burnt in the month of March and was cured at last in November by an ointment prepared by a slave named Arīf.[1] But three weeks after his arrival at Āgra, Aurangzeb was forced by adverse circumstances to resign his post. The older historians have suggested some vague reasons for this sudden fall of Aurangzeb, which do not offer a true explanation of the situation. 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī writes that "misled by the wicked counsels of his foolish companions, he wanted to take to the retired life of an ascetic and had also done some acts which the Emperor disapproved of". In the opinion of Khāfī Khān, Aurangzeb, in order to "anticipate his father's punishment of his bad deeds, himself took off his sword and lived for some days as a hermit" which caused his retirement from the Deccan viceroyalty. The real reason, as found in Aurangzeb's letters, was that owing to Dārā Shukoh's persistent hostility towards him and the partiality of Shāh Jahān for his brother, Aurangzeb found it difficult to carry on the Deccan administration and maintain his self-respect properly and so resigned in disgust.

After his resignation of the viceroyalty of the Deccan, Aurangzeb was appointed governor of Gujarāt in February, 1645, and was subsequently sent on expeditions to Balkh, Badakhshān and

[1] It has been shown by Sir William Foster (*Indian Antiquary*, 1911) and Dr. Smith (*Oxford History*, p. 401), that the story of an English surgeon named Gabriel Boughton curing Jahānārā is not true.

Qandahār, which, as we have already seen, ended in failure. On returning from Qandahār, Aurangzeb could not stay at court in safety, or honourably, owing to the hostility of Dārā Shukoh. He was, therefore, sent to the Deccan as its viceroy for the second time in the beginning of A.D. 1653. From November, 1653, either Daulatābād or Aurangābād was the headquarters of his government.

The task before Aurangzeb was immensely difficult. During the few years following his resignation, the administration of the Deccan had fallen into utter confusion, and its financial condition had become deplorable, through a "succession of short viceroyalties and incompetent viceroys". The administration ran on a constant financial deficit, which had to be made good by draining the imperial exchequer. But this was indeed a shortsighted policy. To improve the finances of the Deccan was, therefore, Aurangzeb's first concern. He not only took steps to promote agriculture in the interests of the peasantry but also adopted certain revenue measures, which considerably improved the economic conditions of his territory and have made his viceroyalty famous in the history of land settlements in the Deccan. He fortunately received valuable assistance from an able Persian revenue officer named Murshid Qulī Khān. Belonging originally to the company of 'Ālī Mardān Khān, Murshid Qulī came to the Deccan with Aurangzeb as *diwān* of Daulatābād and Telingāna and subsequently also of Berar and Khāndesh. For the purpose of revenue-collection, the Deccan *subah* was divided into two parts, the Painghāt or the Lowlands and the Balāghāt or the Highlands, each having its own *diwān* or revenue-minister. The former comprised the whole of Khāndesh and one half of Berar and the latter covered the rest of the territories under viceregal control. Besides reorganising the Deccan finances, Murshid Qulī extended there Todar Mall's system of survey and assessment, with some changes suited to local conditions. Thus in the areas which were thinly populated and where agriculture was in a comparatively backward stage he retained the traditional system of a fixed lump sum payment per plough, while elsewhere he introduced the system of *bātāi* (metayership), under which the share of the State varied according to the nature of the crop and the source of water. In certain parts he introduced another system of assessment known as the *jarib*. According to it, the State-revenue, to be paid in kind, was fixed per *bighā* on a uniform claim to one-fourth of the produce, after a careful measurement of the lands and consideration of the quality and quantity of their produce. Steps were also taken to improve the condition of the

ruined villages and help the agriculturists with advance payments. On the whole, the wise measures of Murshid Qulī contributed to the restoration of prosperity in the Deccan, though the accumulated evils of several years' bad government were too numerous to be removed completely within a short time. Sir J. N. Sarkar observes on the authority of Bhīmsen Burhānpurī, the author of *Nuskha-i-Dilkhushā*, that in 1658 there was not "a single piece of waste land near Aurangābād; wheat and pulse sold at 2½ maunds a rupee, *jawar* and *bajrā* at 3½ maunds, molasses at half a maund, and yellow oil (ghee) at 4 seers".[1]

Having thus reorganised the internal administration, Aurangzeb turned his attention towards destroying the independence of the rich Shiah States of Golkundā and Bijāpur. Excuses for immediate attack were not lacking. So far as the State of Golkundā, already a tributary of the Mughul Empire since 1636, was concerned, it had been frequently in arrears in payment of the stipulated tribute. A more plausible plea was found in the Sultān's treatment of his powerful minister, Mīr Jumla, who had secured the protection of the Mughuls.

Muhammad Sa'īd, better known as Mīr Jumla, was a Persian merchant-adventurer. Like several other adventurers, he made a vast fortune, by trading in diamonds and precious stones, and soon entered the service of 'Abdullah Qutb Shāh, the Sultān of Golkundā. His exceptional talents, military genius, and administrative capacity, were appreciated by his master, who made him the chief minister of the State. Mīr Jumla took advantage of his position to make himself the virtual dictator of the State. He went further and soon carved out a dominion for himself by extensive conquests in the Karnātak. This dominion, about three hundred miles long and fifty miles broad, yielded him an annual revenue of forty lacs of rupees and enabled him to maintain a powerful army, especially strong in artillery. Thus, though his "rank was that of a noble, he possessed the power, wealth and grandeur of a ruling prince". Naturally alarmed at the growing power and wealth of his minister, the Sultān tried to coerce him into obedience and arrested his son, Muhammad 'Amīn Khān, with his family, for his insolent behaviour towards him. Mīr Jumla then entered into intrigues with the Mughul Emperor and Aurangzeb. The latter realised that the friendship of this discontented and semi-independent officer would be of immense service to him in his meditated attack on Golkundā.

Thus the Sultān of Golkundā was betrayed by Mīr Jumla.

[1] Sarkar, *Aurangzeb*, Vol. I, p. 173.

Aurangzeb procured an order from Shāh Jahān bidding the Sultān of Golkundā release Mīr Jumla's family, but without allowing the Sultān a reasonable time to reply to the Emperor's letter, he declared war against him. Acting under Aurangzeb's instructions, his son, Prince Muhammad Sultān, attacked Hyderābād in January, 1556, and the Mughul soldiery plundered the country. Aurangzeb himself reached there on the 6th February and besieged Golkundā the next day. His ambition was nothing short of the complete annexation of the kingdom. But the intervention of Shāh Jahān, under the influence of Dārā Shukoh and Jahānārā, prevented it. In obedience to the orders of his father, Aurangzeb was compelled to raise the siege of Golkundā on the 30th March, 1656, and the kingdom thus got a further lease of life on paying to the Mughul Emperor an indemnity of ten lacs of rupees and ceding to him the district of Rangīr (modern Mānikdrug and Chinoor). Prince Muhammad Sultān, Aurangzeb's son, was married by proxy to the Sultān's daughter, and, by a secret arrangement, Aurangzeb extorted a promise from the Sultān to make his new son-in-law his heir. Mīr Jumla was soon afterwards appointed prime minister of the Empire.

Next came the turn of the kingdom of Bijāpur, which had fallen into disorder after the death of its capable ruler, Muhammad 'Ādīl Shāh, on the 4th November, 1656. This presented an opportunity to Aurangzeb for the fulfilment of his design. He obtained Shāh Jahān's permission to invade the kingdom on the ground that the new ruler of Bijāpur, a youth of eighteen years, was not the son of the deceased Sultān but his origin was obscure. This was nothing but a flimsy pretext and it is clear that the war against Bijāpur "was wholly unrighteous. Bijāpur was not a vassal State, but an independent ally of the Mughul Emperor, and the latter had no lawful right to confirm or question the succession at Bijāpur. The true reason for the Mughul interference was the helplessness of its boy-king and the discord among his officers, which presented a fine 'opportunity for annexation', as Aurangzeb expressed it". With the assistance of Mīr Jumla, Aurangzeb invaded the kingdom early in January, 1657, and, after a prolonged siege, reduced the fortress of Bīdar towards the end of March and of Kalyānī on the 1st August. Further conquest of the Deccan was prevented by the sudden intervention of Shāh Jahān under the influence of Dārā Shukoh and other opponents of Aurangzeb. The Emperor granted peace to the Sultān of Bijāpur (1657), as conditions of which the latter had to pay a heavy indemnity, like the Sultān of Golkundā, and surrender Bīdar, Kalyānī and Parenda. The

illness of Shāh Jahān, and the consequent scramble for the throne among his sons, postponed the complete fulfilment of Aurangzeb's designs in the Deccan, which thus gained a respite for about thirty years.

II. War of Succession

Shāh Jahān's last days were made highly tragic by the outbreak of a terrible war of succession among his sons. It broke out as soon as he fell ill in September, 1657, and subjected the old Emperor to extreme humiliation and agony till his exit from this world. Shāh Jahān had four sons, all of mature age at that time—Dārā Shukoh aged 43, Shujā aged 41, Aurangzeb aged 39, and Murād aged 33—and two daughters, Jahānārā, who sided with Dārā Shukoh, and Raushnārā, who joined the party of Aurangzeb. All the brothers had by that time gained considerable experience in civil and military affairs as governors of provinces and commanders of armies, but there were differences among them in personal qualities and capacities. The eldest of them, Dārā Shukoh, was in the confidence of his father, who desired him to be his successor. A man of eclectic views, liberal disposition, and of scholarly instincts, Dārā Shukoh mixed with the followers of other faiths and studied the doctrines of the Vedānta, the Talmud, the New Testament and the works of Sūfī writers. He caused a Persian version of the Atharva Veda and the Upanishads to be made with the assistance of some Brāhmaṇa scholars[1] and aimed at finding a *modus vivendi* among the apparently hostile creeds. For this he naturally incurred the displeasure of the orthodox members among his co-religionists, who went against him. But he was not a heretic. He never "discarded the essential dogmas of Islam; he only displayed the eclecticism of the Sūfīs, a recognised school of Islamic believers. If he showed contempt for the external rites of religion, he only shared the standpoint of many noble thinkers of all Churches, such as John Milton". His latest biographer has aptly remarked: "It is hardly an exaggeration to say that any one who intends to take up the solution of the problem of religious peace in India must begin the work where Dārā had left it, and proceed on the path chalked out by that prince." But the excessive fondness of his father for him, and his constant presence at the court, prevented the growth in him of the qualities of an astute politician or the abilities of a brave general and also bred in him a

[1] For a list of Dārā Shukoh's works *vide* *J.P.H.S.*, Vol. II, pp. 21–38; *J.A.S.B.*, Part I, 1870, pp. 273–9; Sarkar's *Aurangzeb*, Vol. I, p. 271 footnote; Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, Vol. I, Chapter VI.

sense of pride, which made him contemptuous of advice. His anger was, however, "seldom more than momentary". The second brother, Shujā, then governor of Bengal, possessed intelligence and was a brave soldier. But his excessive love of ease and pleasure made him "weak, indolent, and negligent, incapable of sustained effort, vigilant caution, and profound combination". The youngest, Murād, then governor of Gujarāt, was no doubt frank, liberal and brave, but was addicted to hard drinking and could not therefore develop the qualities needed for leadership. Aurangzeb, the third brother, was the ablest of all. He possessed uncommon industry and profound diplomatic and military skill, and an unquestionable capacity for administration. Further, as a zealous Sunnī Mussalmān, he naturally obtained the support of the orthodox Sunnīs. As we shall see, the differences in the character of the rival princes did much to influence the course of the struggle. Dārā Shukoh, a liberal man but an ill-qualified general and statesman, was a poor match for the clever and intelligent Aurangzeb; Shujā and Murād had also to suffer for their incompetence before the superior generalship and tact of Aurangzeb.

Dārā Shukoh alone of the four brothers was present at Āgra when Shāh Jahān fell ill in September, 1657. The illness was indeed serious and it was suspected by the three absentee brothers that their father had really expired and the news had been suppressed by Dārā Shukoh. So precarious is the position of an autocracy that even the illness of the Emperor gave rise to confusion and disorder in the kingdom, which became more intense as soon as the fratricidal contest commenced. Shujā proclaimed himself Emperor at Rājmahal, the then capital of Bengal, and marched towards the metropolis of the Empire. But on arriving near Benares he was defeated by an army sent against him under Dārā Shukoh's son, Sulaimān Shukoh, and was forced to retire to Bengal. Murād also crowned himself at Ahmadābād (5th December, 1657). He joined Aurangzeb at Mālwa and formed an alliance with him. They entered into an agreement to partition the Empire, which was solemnised in the name of God and the Prophet. The terms of the agreement were: (i) "one-third of the booty would belong to Murād Bakhsh and two-thirds to Aurangzeb, (ii) after the conquest of the Empire, the Punjab, Afghānistān, Kāshmīr and Sind would belong to Murād, who would set up the standard of kingship there, issue coins and proclaim his own name as king". The combined troops of Aurangzeb and Murād marched towards the north and reached Dharmāt, fourteen miles south-south-west of Ujjain. The Emperor sent Rājā Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Qāsīm Khān to check

their advance. The hostile armies met at Dharmāt on the 15th April, 1658, where the imperialists were signally defeated, owing partly "to the evils of divided counsels" and jealousy between the Hindu and Muslim soldiers and partly to the inferior military tactics of Jaswant Singh as compared with those of Aurangzeb, who had "aged in war". The Rāthors fought with desperate valour and suffered heavy losses, while Qāsīm Khān did almost nothing to serve the cause of his master. When Jaswant Singh fled to Jodhpur his proud wife shut the gates of the castle against him for retreating from the field of battle. The battle of Dharmāt immensely added to Aurangzeb's resources and prestige. As Sir J. N. Sarkar remarks: "The hero of the Deccan wars and the victor of Dharmāt faced the world not only without loss but with his military reputation rendered absolutely unrivalled in India."

The victorious princes crossed the Chambal over a neglected ford and reached the plain of Samūgarh, eight miles to the east of Āgra Fort. Dārā Shukoh had also advanced there towards the end of May to meet his opponents with an army of 50,000 soldiers "formidable in appearance only" but "composed of a miscellaneous host of diverse classes and localities, hastily got together and not properly co-ordinated nor taught to act in concert". A battle ensued on the 29th May. It was hotly contested and both parties fought bravely, Murād getting three wounds in the face. True to the tradition of their race, the Rājputs under Dārā Shukoh fought gallantly under their brave young leader, Rām Singh, and perished to a man in making a desperate attack upon the division of Prince Murād. Unluckily for Dārā Shukoh, his elephant being severely wounded by an arrow, he got down from it and mounted a horse. "That action," observes Smith, "settled the fate of the battle." Finding the *howdāh* of their master's elephant empty, the surviving troops thought that he had fallen and dispersed from the field in utter confusion. Filled with despair, Dārā Shukoh fled towards Āgra, leaving his camp and guns to be captured by his enemies, and reached there "in an unspeakably wretched condition". The defeat of Dārā Shukoh was in fact due to some tactical errors on the part of his generals and to the weaker condition of his artillery, and it was not caused wholly, as some accounts would lead us to believe, by the artful advice of Khalīlullāh, who was in charge of the right wing of his army.

The battle of Samūgarh practically decided the issue in the succession war among the sons of Shāh Jahān. The discomfiture of Dārā, with the loss of many of his soldiers, made it easier for Aurangzeb to realise his ambition. It may very well be said that

the capture of the throne of Hindustān by Aurangzeb was almost a logical sequel to his victory at Sāmūgarh. Soon after this victory he marched to Āgra and seized the fort there on the 8th June following, defying all efforts of Shāh Jahān for an amicable settlement and baffling the attempts of the imperial defenders of the fort to prevent its capture.

Deprived of his throne, Shāh Jahān had to suffer most callous treatment. When Aurangzeb, as a sort of offensive measure against the defenders of the Āgra fort, stopped the supply of water from the Jumnā, the unhappy Emperor had to quench his thirst in the dry summer of June with brackish water from the wells within the fort. He wrote to Aurangzeb in a pathetic tone:—

> "Praised be the Hindus in all cases,
> As they ever offer water to their dead.
> And thou, my son, art a marvellous Mussalmān,
> As thou causest me in life to lament for (lack of) water."

Placed under strict confinement as an ordinary prisoner Shāh Jahān was denied even the common conveniences. Aurangzeb turned a deaf ear to all requests of the Emperor and Jahānārā for reconciliation; and the unhappy Emperor "at last bowed to the inevitable, and, like a child that cries itself to sleep, ceased to complain". He found solace in religion, and, in a spirit of resignation, passed his last days in prayer and meditation in the company of his pious daughter, Jahānārā, till at last death, at the age of seventy-four, on the 22nd January, 1666, relieved him of all his miseries.

From Āgra Aurangzeb started towards Delhi on the 13th June, 1658. But on the way he halted at Rupnagar near Mathurā to crush the opposition of his brother, Murād, who had by that time been able to see through the design of his brother and had grown jealous of him. Instead of meeting Murād in the open field, Aurangzeb inveigled him into a trap. The unfortunate Prince was imprisoned first in the fort of Salīmgarh, whence he was removed to the fortress of Gwālior in January, 1659, and was executed on the 4th December, 1661, on the charge of murdering Diwān 'Ālī Naqī. Already after Murād's arrest, Aurangzeb had gone to Delhi, where, on the 21st July, 1658, he crowned himself as Emperor.

Aurangzeb next proceeded to deal with his other rivals. The defeat of Dārā Shukoh at Dharmāt and Samūgarh emboldened Shujā to make a fresh bid for power. But his hopes were shattered when Aurangzeb signally defeated him at Khajwah, near Allahābād, on the 5th January, 1659. He was chased by Mīr Jumla

through West Bengal to Dacca and thence to Arākān in May, 1660. Nothing was again heard of Shujā. He was probably slaughtered with his family by the Arākānese. Aurangzeb's eldest son, Prince Muhammad, having quarrelled with Mīr Jumla, joined Shujā for a time. But he was punished for this with imprisonment for life and met his death about 1676.

When fortune went against Dārā Shukoh, his son, Sulaimān Shukoh, was also deserted by his generals and soldiers, who thought that there was no gain in following the "losing side any longer". After fleeing from place to place, Sulaimān Shukoh, with his wife, a few other ladies, his foster-brother, Muhammad Shāh, and only seventeen followers, found refuge with a Hindu Rājā of the Garhwal Hills, who "was all kindness and attention to his princely guest in distress". But pressed by Aurangzeb, his host's son betrayed him into the hands of his enemies on the 27th December, 1660. The captive prince, then in the prime of his youth and singularly handsome, was brought in chains before Aurangzeb and told him that he would prefer immediate death to slow poisoning by means of *poustā* drink or "infusion of opium-poppy heads". Aurangzeb promised "that this drink should not be administered, and that his mind might be perfectly easy". But the promise was not kept, and the dreadful drink was administered every morning to the unlucky prince until in May, 1662, "he was sent to the next world through the exertions of his keepers". Dārā Shukoh's younger son, Sipihr Shukoh, and Murād's son, Izid Bakhsh, not being considered serious rivals, were granted their lives and were subsequently married to the third and the fifth of Aurangzeb's daughters respectively.

The story of Dārā Shukoh's end is no less sad and pathetic than that of his brother, Murād, or of his son, Sulaimān Shukoh. After the capture of Āgra by Aurangzeb and the captivity of Shāh Jahān, Dārā Shukoh fled from Delhi to Lahore, where he busied himself in preparations to encounter the pursuing troops of Aurangzeb. He adopted some measures to guard the ferries over the Sutlej and hoped that as the rains set in, it would take some time for Aurangzeb to reach Lahore. "But in hoping thus," writes Sir J. N. Sarkar, "he had counted without Aurangzeb's energy and strength of will, before which every obstacle—human or physical—gave way." About a month after Dārā's arrival at Lahore, his "dreaded rival" crossed the Sutlej with his army and drove Dārā with his family to Multān. The fugitive prince, still chased from place to place by the chief officers of Aurangzeb, who himself had returned to the east in September, 1657, to remove

the dangers created by Shujā and Sulaimān Shukoh, at last succeeded in reaching Gujarāt. Here he was unexpectedly fortunate in being welcomed (January, 1659) and helped financially by its newly appointed governor, Shāh Nawāz Khān, who cherished resentment against Aurangzeb. Being thus able to recuperate his strength to some extent, Dārā was thinking of returning to the Deccan, where he expected support from the Shiah rulers of Bijāpur and Golkundā. This would have been the right policy for him. But Jaswant Singh, who had been already won over by Aurangzeb, lured him by promises of help to march towards Ajmer. The Rājput chief, whose conduct during this war of succession was questionable, proved false to his promises and Dārā could not get the much-hoped-for Rājput help. He was forced to fight with Aurangzeb, who had arrived near Ajmer. Considering it inadvisable, in view of his scanty resources, to meet the overwhelming strength of his enemy's army in a pitched battle in the open field, Dārā entrenched himself in a strong and admirably selected position at the pass of Deorāi, four miles south of Ajmer, and fought for three days, 12th–14th April, 1659. But he was ultimately defeated and found safety in hurried flight. Hunted from place to place (Rājputāna, Cutch and Sind) by the troops of Aurangzeb under Jai Singh and Bahādur Khān, Dārā found no asylum in India. He hurried towards the north-west frontier in June, 1659, and sought shelter with Jiwān Khān, the Afghān chief of Dadar (a place nine miles east of the Bolān Pass), whom he had saved, a few years back, from the sentence of death passed on him by Shāh Jahān. But on the way to Dadar "the greatest of all misfortunes" befell him. His wife, Nādira Begam, who had been his devoted companion in his days of wanderings and had been suffering for some time from an attack of diarrhoea, now succumbed to prolonged hardships and want of medicine and rest. This threw Dārā into utter bewilderment and intense grief.[1] "Mountain after mountain of trouble," remarks Khāfī Khān, "thus pressed upon the heart of Dārā, grief was added to grief, sorrow to sorrow, so that his mind no longer retained its equilibrium." To add to his misfortune, the faithless Afghān chief betrayed him and made him over, with his two daughters and his second son, Sipihr Shukoh,

[1] It should be noted that the Mughul princes, in spite of their polygamous habits, showed an intense passion of conjugal love. As Dr. Smith points out, "A beautiful album in the India Office Library is a pathetic memorial of Dara Shukoh's love". It bears the following inscription in his handwriting: "This album was presented to his nearest and dearest friend, the Lady Nādirah Begam, by Prince Muhammad Dārā Shukoh, son of the Emperor Shāh Jahān, in the year 1051" (A.D. 1641–1642).

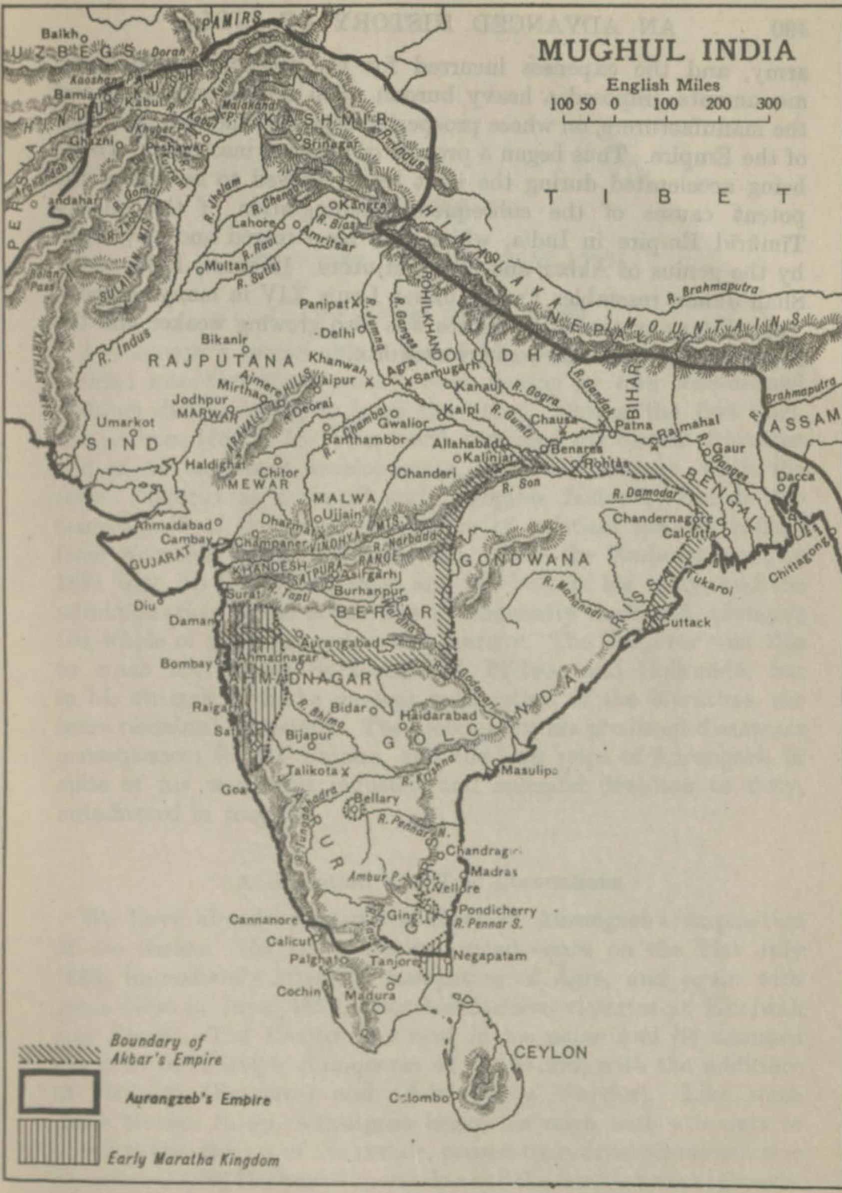
to Bahādur Khān, who brought the captives to Delhi on the 23rd August, 1659. On the 29th of the same month they were paraded throughout the city. "To complete his humiliation," writes Sir J. N. Sarkar, "Dārā was seated in an uncovered *howdāh* on the back of a small female elephant covered with dirt. . . . Exposed to the full blaze of an August sun, he was taken through the scenes of his former glory and splendour. In the bitterness of disgrace, he did not raise his head, nor cast his glance on any side, but sat like a crushed twig." His tragic plight excited pity in the hearts of the citizens. Bernier, an eye-witness of the scene, writes: "The crowd assembled was immense; and everywhere I observed the people weeping, and lamenting the fate of Dārā in the most touching language. . . . From every quarter I heard piercing and distressing shrieks . . . men, women and children wailing as if some mighty calamity had happened to themselves." But not a single hand could be raised to rescue the unfortunate prince, as he was girt round by cavalry and archers. Then a popular riot, directed against the traitor Malik Jiwān Khān, broke out on the 30th August. This riot hastened the end of Dārā, whose life could no longer be prolonged by Aurangzeb. His case was placed before the Doctors of Muslim law, who condemned him on a charge of deviation from the Islamic faith. On the night of the 30th August the executioners snatched Sipihr away from his father's embrace and beheaded Dārā. By Aurangzeb's order his corpse was paraded throughout the city to let the people know that their favourite was no more, and then buried in a vault under the dome of the tomb of Humāyūn. Thus the reign of Shāh Jahān, which had begun with high prospects, came to a close in a series of dark tragedies.

I. A Critical Estimate of Shāh Jahān's Character and Reign

Shāh Jahān was not essentially an unrelenting or excessively pleasure-seeking ruler, as European writers like Roe, Terry, Bernier, and De Laet considered him to be, and, as a modern writer, Dr. Smith, also holds. There are, of course, certain instances of his severity. Stern as a conqueror and unsparing to his political rivals, Shāh Jahān indeed acquired his throne by means that left unpleasant memories; but when we take into consideration the circumstances in which he had been placed through the ceaseless intrigues of Nūr Jahān, "we lose", as Dow writes, "half our rage in the pressure of circumstances that drove him to such a ghastly step". Further "for these early crimes he

made ample amends by the strict justice and clemency of his government and his solicitude for the well-being of his subjects". Thus he did much to alleviate the sufferings of the people during the severe famine of 1631–1632 and displayed considerable industry in the task of administration. Though not as great a warrior as some of his ancestors, Shāh Jahān was not devoid of military qualities. He was a zealous champion of his faith. He revived the pilgrimage tax and took steps not only to check the conversion of the Muslims to other faiths but also to add to their number. Brought up by Ruqayyā Begam, he could read and speak in Turkī, and trained in his early life by such eminent teachers as Mullā Qāsīm Beg Tabrezī, Hakim Dawāi, Shaikh 'Abdul Khair and Shaikh Sūfī, he could speak both Persian and Hindī. Not pitiless by nature, Shāh Jahān was a loving father and a devoted husband. He had an intense love for Mumtāz Mahal, whom he had married in 1612. The couple enjoyed a happy life for about nineteen years, and Mumtāz was her husband's unfailing friend and prudent adviser in the days of his adversity. She died in child-birth in 1631, and to immortalise her name, Shāh Jahān built on her grave the famous Tāj Mahal, which stands unrivalled as a memorial of conjugal attachment.

The reign of Shāh Jahān is usually considered to have been the golden period of Mughul rule in India, which then reached its climax. There was no serious challenge to the Emperor's authority before the war of succession. No grave external menace threatened India itself. The period saw the development of the export trade between India and Western Asia and the beginning of the export trade with Europe, and the finances of the State were flourishing. It was also marked by pomp and splendour, which were amply attested by brilliant productions in architecture, like the magnificent *Tāj*, the *Pearl Mosque* of Āgra, the *Diwān-i-'Am*, the *Diwān-i-khās*, the *Jāmi' Masjid* and the "celebrated Peacock Throne". All these lead one to believe that peace and prosperity prevailed throughout the Empire. But a careful study of the accounts of the contemporary European travellers, and the records of the English factories in India, show "that there were shadows in the picture which were ignored by the court annalists". Beneath the surface of outward splendour and apparent prosperity, there were some grievous anomalies in the economic system of the country. The factory records of the time bear out the statement of Bernier that the misrule of the provincial governors "often deprived the peasant and artisan of the necessaries of life". Further, the maintenance of an elaborate bureaucracy and a large


MUGHUL INDIA
English Miles
100 50 0 100 200 300
TIBET
PAMIRS
Balkh
UZBEGS
Bamian
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
KASHMIR
Srinagar
R. Indus
R. Jhelam
R. Chenab
Kangra
Lahore
R. Bias
Amritsar
R. Ravi
Multan
R. Sutlej
SULAIMAN MTS.
PERSIA
Panipat
Delhi
R. Jumna
R. Ganges
ROHILKHAND
HIMALAYA
NEPAL MOUNTAINS
R. Brahmaputra
Bikanir
RAJPUTANA
Khanwah
Agra
Samugarh
OUDH
Ajmere
Mirtha
Jaipur
Jodhpur
MARWAR
Deorai
ARAVALLI HILLS
Kanauj
R. Gogra
R. Gandak
BIHAR
Umarkot
SIND
Kalpi
R. Gumti
Chausa
Patna
Rajmahal
ASSAM
Gwalior
R. Chambal
Ranthambor
Allahabad
Benares
Gaur
Haldighat
Chitor
MEWAR
Kalinjar
Chanderi
Rohtas
BENGAL
Dacca
R. Son
R. Damodar
MALWA
Ujjain
Chandernagore
Calcutta
Ahmadabad
Dharmat
Cambay
Champaner
VINDHYA MTS.
R. Narbada
GUJARAT
KHANDESH
SATPURA RANGE
GONDWANA
Chittagong
Asirgarh
Surat
R. Tapti
Burhanpur
Tukaroi
Diu
Daman
BERAR
R. Mahanadi
Cuttack
Aurangabad
Bombay
Ahmadnagar
AHMADNAGAR
ORISSA
Raigarh
Bidar
Haidarabad
R. Godavari
R. Bhima
Bijapur
GOLCONDA
Talikota
Masulipatam
Goa
R. Kistna
Bellary
R. Tungabhadra
R. Pennar N.
Chandragiri
Madras
Ambur P.
Nellore
Pondicherry
R. Pennar S.
Gingi
Cannanore
Calicut
Palghat
Tanjore
Negapatam
Cochin
Madura
CEYLON
Colombo
Boundary of Akbar's Empire
Aurangzeb's Empire
Early Maratha Kingdom

army, and the expenses incurred for the splendid architectural monuments, imposed a heavy burden upon the agriculturists and the manufacturers, on whose prosperity depended the very existence of the Empire. Thus began a process of national insolvency, which, being accelerated during the next reign, proved to be one of the potent causes of the subsequent disintegration of the mighty Tīmūrīd Empire in India, which had been reared and developed by the genius of Akbar and his coadjutors. In short, India under Shāh Jahān resembles France under Louis XIV in many respects. The military system of the State was also growing weaker and the revenue administration was growing lax.

CHAPTER IV

AURANGZEB 'ĀLAMGĪR (1658–1707)

1. Two Halves of the Reign

AURANGZEB's remarkable reign of fifty years can be "naturally divided into two equal parts", each having its own well-defined features distinguishing it from the other. During the first part, that is from 1658 to 1681, the north remained the centre of interest and of all important developments, civil and military, while the south "figured as a far-off and negligible factor". But in the second half of the reign the centre of political gravity shifted from Northern India to the Deccan, where the Emperor went in 1681 with his family, his court and the bulk of his army, and the administration of the north was consequently neglected, plunging the whole of it into disorder and anarchy. The Emperor was able to crush the Muslim Sultānates of Bijāpur and Golkundā, but in his struggle with the nascent nationalism of the Marāthas, the issue remained undecided. The Deccan exodus produced disastrous consequences for the Empire, and the long reign of Aurangzeb, in spite of his wonderful industry and splendid devotion to duty, culminated in tragedy.

2. Accession and Two Coronations

We have already related the story of Aurangzeb's acquisition of the throne. He was twice enthroned—once on the 21st July 1658, immediately after his occupation of Āgra, and again with great éclat in June, 1659, after his decisive victories at Khajwah and Deorāi. The *Khutba* was read in his name and he assumed the title of *'Ālamgīr* (Conqueror of the World) with the additions of *Pādshāh* (Emperor) and *Ghāzī* (Holy Warrior). Like some other Muslim rulers, Aurangzeb began his reign with attempts to alleviate the distress of the people, caused by general administrative disorders during the war of succession and the famine prices of goods. He remitted many vexatious cesses and taxes, but, as in the case of earlier rulers, his prohibition, except in one or two cases, "had no effect".

3. Territorial Expansion: North-Eastern Push

The territorial expansion of the Mughul Empire, which was a process continuing through two centuries, went on apace in the reign of Aurangzeb. If we exclude the losses of the preceding reign in Qandahār and Central Asia, the conquests of the Emperors had remained intact, and before the rise of the Marātha kingdom in the south, Aurangzeb's "ambitious and enterprising officers" successfully extended their master's dominion. Palāmau was conquered in 1661 by Dāūd Khān, the governor of Bihār. On the eastern frontier of the Empire the officers of Aurangzeb found ample scope for their energies. In 1661 Mīr Jumla, the governor of Bengal, set out with a well equipped army towards this frontier to check the aggressions of the Āhoms. A people of Mongoloid origin, the Āhoms had migrated from their original home in Upper Burma and occupied a part of the Brahmaputra valley as early as the thirteenth century A.D. Gradually extending their territories to the west during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they established a dominion which by the end of the seventeenth century stretched up to the Bar Nadī river in the north-west and the Kalāng river in the south-west. Here they were gradually Hinduised and adopted the Hindu religion and customs. At the same time, the eastern limit of the Mughul Empire had been extended up to the Bar Nadī river by the conquest of Koch Hājo, embracing the present districts of Kāmarūpa and Goālpārā. This made a conflict between the Mughuls and the Āhoms inevitable. As a matter of fact, the Mughuls had already had to fight hard with the Āhoms, when the latter raided the eastern frontier of the Empire during the reign of Shāh Jahān, and a peace was concluded early in 1639. But taking advantage of the war of succession, the Āhoms occupied Gauhātī in 1658 and seized 140 horses, 40 pieces of cannon, 200 matchlocks and much property. To punish these aggressors, Mīr Jumla started from Dacca early in November, 1661, with a powerful army of 12,000 cavalry and 30,000 infantry, provided with artillery, provisions for siege and a number of armed boats, which were indispensably necessary for carrying on war in those parts. His early operations were successful. He conquered both Cooch Bihār and Assam, and sharing with the common soldiers all the hardships which the "opposition of Nature and man" could impose during his "triumphant march", he reached Garhgāon, the capital of the Āhom kingdom, on the 17th March, 1662. The Āhoms now offered little resistance and left their capital and property to the mercy of the imperialists, who got enormous spoils.

But Nature soon fought for the Āhoms. With the commencement of the rainy season, Mīr Jumla's army suffered terribly from the unhealthy climate and lack of provisions and medicine. Emboldened by this, the Āhoms, who "had been scared away and not crushed", soon resumed the offensive and began to harass the Mughuls, whose sufferings increased owing to the outbreak of pestilence and famine in their camp. But, undaunted by the odds, the Mughul governor continued to fight and resumed the offensive after the rains. Considering that further resistance would be of no avail, the Āhoms concluded a treaty of peace with the imperialists. Thus, "judged as a military exploit", remarks Sir J. N. Sarkar, "Mīr Jumla's invasion of Assam was a success". The Āhom king, Jayadhvaj, promised to pay an annual tribute, and a heavy war-indemnity, a part of which was to be delivered immediately and the rest was to be cleared off during the next twelve months in three equal instalments. The Mughuls were also to occupy more than half the province of Darrang, rich in elephants. But this success was purchased at a great cost. It caused immense hardships to the Mughuls and the loss of many lives, including that of Mīr Jumla himself, one of Aurangzeb's best generals, who died on the 30th March, 1663, on his way back to Dacca. It was also short-lived. A few years later the Āhoms reoccupied Kāmarūpa. The Mughul government carried on a long desultory warfare, but with no permanent advantage.

Shāista Khān, son of Āsaf Khan, and maternal uncle of Aurangzeb, was appointed governor of Bengal after the short and unsuccessful administration of an acting viceroy, which immediately followed the death of Mīr Jumla. He held this post for about thirty years, with a break of less than three years, and died at Āgra in 1694, when he was more than ninety years old. He chastised the Portuguese pirates, annexed the island of Sondīp in the Bay of Bengal, which had been a stronghold of pirates, and conquered Chittagong (1666) from their ally, the King of Arākān. But the evil of piracy could not be wholly eradicated. It continued to harass the people of eastern Bengal till late in the eighteenth century.

4. The North-West Frontier Policy

Out of political and economic considerations, Aurangzeb had to follow a forward policy on the north-west frontier, where the turbulent Muslim tribes had all along proved a source of great anxiety to the Mughul Empire. The scanty produce of the fields of that region forced upon the growing numbers of the hardy

Afghān clans living there the habits of highway robbery and of blackmailing the rich cities of the north-western Punjab. In order to keep the north-western passes open and the valleys at their foot safe, the government of Aurangzeb first tried to win over these hillmen by payments of money. But "even political pensions were not always effective in securing obedience". Troubles began early in A.D 1667, when the Yūsufzāīs rose in arms under one of their leaders named Bhāgū. A large number of them crossed the Indus above Attock and invaded the Hazāra district, while other bands began to ravage the western Peshāwār and Attock districts. The Yūsufzāī rising was, however, suppressed in the course of a few months.

But in 1672 the Afrīdīs rose in revolt against the Mughuls under their chieftain Akmal Khān, who crowned himself king and summoned all the Pathāns to organise themselves in a sort of national war. In the month of May the insurgents inflicted a crushing defeat on Muhammad Āmin Khān at 'Ālī Masjid. Muhammad Āmin, and some of his senior officers, escaped, but the Mughuls lost everything else. This victory increased the prestige and resources of Akmal Khān and lured more recruits to his side so that "the whole of the Pathān land from Attock to Qandahār" rose in arms. The Khattak clan of the Pathāns also joined the Afrīdīs, and Khūsh-hāl Khān, the poet and hero of the former, "became the leading spirit of the national rising and inspired the tribesmen with his pen and sword alike". In February, 1674, the Afghāns assailed an imperial force under Shujā'at Khān, who was killed, though the remnant of his army was rescued by a Rāthor contingent, sent by Jaswant Singh to support the Mughuls.

This disaster convinced Aurangzeb that more serious efforts were necessary to restore imperial prestige in the north-west. He went in person to Hasan Abdāl, near Peshāwār, early in July, 1674, and by a clever combination of diplomacy and arms achieved much success. Many Afghān clans were bought over with presents, pensions, *jāgīrs*, and offices, while the more refractory ones were subdued by arms. When the situation had considerably improved, the Emperor left the Punjab for Delhi by December, 1675. The success of Aurangzeb was confirmed by the wise policy of Āmin Khān, the capable governor of Afghānistān from 1677 to 1698, who followed a tactful conciliatory policy under the wise advice of his wife, Sāhibjī, a daughter of 'Ālī Mardān Khān. Thus the Mughul Emperor was able to suppress the Afghān risings, and restore imperial prestige, in the north-west "by following the

policy of paying subsidies, or by setting up one clan against another—or, to use his own metaphor, breaking two bones by knocking them together". The Khattak hero, Khūsh-hāl, continued to fight for several years more, till his own son proved to be his worst enemy and betrayed him to the Mughuls.

There is no doubt that the frontier wars of the Mughuls were brought to a successful conclusion. But their indirect effects were prejudicial to the interests of the Empire. As Sir J. N. Sarkar observes: "Ruinous as the Afghān war was to imperial finances, its political effect was even more harmful. It made the employment of the Afghāns in the ensuing Rājput war impossible, though the Afghāns were just the class of soldiers who could have won victory in that rugged and barren country. Moreover, it relieved the pressure on Shivājī by draining the Deccan of the best Mughul troops for service on the north-west frontier. The Marātha chief took advantage of this division of his enemy's strength to sweep in a dazzling succession of triumphs through Golkundā to the Karnātak and back again through Mysore and Bijāpur to Rāigarh, during the fifteen months following December, 1675. It was the climax of his career; but the Afrīdīs and the Khattaks made his unbroken success possible."

5. Relations with the Muslim World outside India

Between 1661 and 1667 Aurangzeb received "complimentary embassies" from some foreign Muslim powers, such as the Sharif of Mecca, the Kings of Persia, Balkh, Bukhārā, Kāshghar, Urganj (Khiva) and Shahr-i-nau, the Turkish governors of Basra, Hadramaut, Yaman and Mocha, the ruler of Barbary, and the King of Abyssinia. From Constantinople only one embassy came during his reign, in June, 1590. "His policy at the beginning was," remarks Sir J. N. Sarkar, "to dazzle the eyes of foreign princes by the lavish gifts of presents to them and their envoys, and induce the outer Muslim world to forget his treatment of his father and brothers, or at least to show courtesy to the successful man of action and master of India's untold wealth, especially when he was free with his money."

6. Aurangzeb's Religious Attitude and Policy

Aurangzeb was above all a zealous Sunnī Muslim, and his religious policy was not influenced by any consideration of worldly gain. As one who secured the throne as the champion of Sunni

orthodoxy against the liberal Dārā, he tried to enforce strictly the Quranic law, according to which it behoves every pious Muslim to "exert himself in the path of God", or, in other words, to carry on holy wars (*jihād*) against non-Muslim lands (*dār-ul-harb*) till they are converted into realms of Islam (*dār-ul-Islām*). This made him extremely puritanic in temperament, so that he took several steps to enforce "his own ideas of the morose seriousness of life and punctilious orthodoxy". He simplified the customary celebrations on his birthday and coronation day. From the eleventh year of his reign he discontinued the practice of *Jharokā-darśan*, a practice by which his predecessors appeared every morning on the balcony on the wall of the palace to accept the salute of the people, who then gathered on the ground in front. In the same year he forbade music at court and dismissed the old musicians and singers. But music, though banned from the court, could not be "banished from the human soul". It continued to be secretly practised by the nobles, and the imperial prohibition had some force only in important cities. In the twelfth year the ceremony of weighing the Emperor's body on two birthdays against gold, silver and other commodities was given up, and royal astronomers and astrologers were dismissed. But the belief of the Muslims in astrology was too deeply rooted in their minds to be removed by an imperial ordinance; it remained active till late in the eighteenth century. In order to avoid the *Kalima* (Muhammadan confession of faith) on the coins being defiled by men of other faiths, he forbade its use. He also abolished the *Nauroz*, which the Mughul Emperors of India had borrowed from Persia. He appointed Censors of Public Morals (*Muhtasibs*) to "regulate the lives of the people in strict accordance with the Holy Law".

Aurangzeb personally practised what he sought to enforce on others. His private life was marked by a high standard of morality, and he scrupulously abstained from the common vices of his time. Thus he was regarded by his contemporaries as a "*darvish* born in the purple" and the Muslims venerated him as a "*Zindā Pīr*" or living saint. To "promote general morality", he issued a number of regulations. He passed an ordinance prohibiting the production, sale and public use, of wine and *bhāng*. Manucci tells us that the dancing girls and public women were ordered either to get themselves married or to leave the kingdom. The Emperor also passed strict orders against singing obscene songs, and stopped the burning of faggots and processions during certain religious festivals. It is mentioned in the official "guide-books" of Aurangzeb's reign that he forbade *Satī* (December, 1663), but "the evidence of

contemporary European travellers in India shows that the royal prohibition was seldom observed".

The Emperor, however, did not rest satisfied with these regulations only. He issued other *firmans* and ukases, which marked the inauguration of a new policy in regard to important sections of the people. The year 1679 saw the reimposition of the *jizya* tax on "unbelievers".

The new regulations and ordinances must have produced a deep impression on the people affected, and added much to the difficulties with which the imperial government had to deal. No one can deny the Emperor Aurangzeb the credit of being a sincere and conscientious exponent of the faith that was in him. But it is also true that his ardour and zeal made him oblivious of the fact that the country over which destiny had placed him to rule was not inhabited by a homogeneous population but included various elements rich in their religious traditions and ideals, which needed tactful and sympathetic understanding. Aurangzeb certainly made a mistake in identifying the interests of the State with those of his faith and in offending those who differed from it. This policy generated feelings of discontent among certain sections of the people, which by distracting his energies during the remainder of his reign proved to be one of the most potent causes of the decline and fall of the Mughul Empire.

7. Reaction against the New Policy

A. The Jāts, the Bundelās and the Satnāmīs

The first serious outbreak of anti-imperial reaction took place among the Jāts of the Muttrā (Mathurā) district, where the imperial *faujdār*, 'Abdun-Nabī, had oppressed them greatly. In 1669 the sturdy Jāt peasantry rose under a leader, Gokla, zamindār of Tilpat, killed the *faujdār*, and kept the whole district in disorder for a year, till they were suppressed by a strong imperial force under Hasan 'Ālī Khān, the new *faujdār* of Muttrā. Gokla was put to death and the members of his family converted to Islam. But this did not crush the Jāts permanently. They rose once again in 1685 under the leadership of Rājā Rām and plundered Akbar's tomb at Sikandra in 1688. Rājā Rām was defeated and slain and the principal stronghold of the Jāts was reduced in 1691. But they soon found a more formidable leader in Churāman, who welded the disorganised Jāts into a strong military power and organised an armed resistance against the Mughuls after Aurangzeb's death.

The second armed protest against Aurangzeb's policy was led by the Bundelā prince, Chhatrasāl. We have already traced the early relations of the Mughuls with the Bundelās. Chhatrasāl's father, Champat Rāi, had risen against Aurangzeb during the early part of his reign, but hard pressed by the Emperor, he committed suicide to escape imprisonment. Chhatrasāl had served the Emperor in the Deccan, where, inspired by the example of Shivājī, he "dreamt of taking to a life of adventure and independence". The discontent of the Hindu population of Bundelkhand and Mālwa gave him the opportunity to stand forth "as the champion" of his faith and Bundelā liberty by 1671. He gained several victories over the Mughuls, and succeeded in carving out an independent principality for himself in Eastern Mālwa with its capital at Panna, before his death in 1731.

Another revolt occurred in March, 1672, among the Satnāmīs, who were originally an inoffensive sect of Hindu devotees with their centres at Nārnol (in the Patiāla State) and Mewāt (Ālwar region). Khāfī Khān writes of them: "These men dress like devotees, but they nevertheless carry on trade and agriculture, though their trade is on a small scale. In the way of their religion, they have dignified themselves with the title of 'Good name', this being the meaning of Satnām. They are not allowed to acquire wealth in any but a lawful calling. If any one attempts to wrong or oppress them by force, or by exercise of authority, they will not endure it. Many of them have weapons or arms." The immediate cause of the rising of the Satnāmīs was the murder of one of them by a Mughul foot-soldier. They occupied Nārnol, and when the situation proved to be serious the Mughul Emperor "ordered his tents to be brought out". The untrained Satnāmī peasants were soon overpowered by a large imperial force. "Very few of them escaped, and that tract of country was cleared" of them.

B. The Sikhs

The new imperial policy caused discontent among the Sikhs also. We may conveniently give here a short history of the Sikhs during the reigns of the predecessors of Aurangzeb before we deal with his relations with them. The Sikh community, destined to play an important part in the history of Modern India, came into being during the period of religious revival which marked the history of India in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It was originally founded as a religious sect by Guru Nānak, a religious preacher of saintly disposition, who emphasised the

fundamental truth underlying all religions, and the chief features of whose system were its "non-sectarian character" and its harmony with secular life. He died in 1538 after nominating one of his disciples, Angad (1538–1552), as his successor, excluding his two sons. Angad and the next Guru, Amardās (1552–1574), were men of high character. Amardās was succeeded in the Guru's office by his son-in-law, Rāmdās (1574–1581). Akbar, who had a great veneration for this Guru, granted him a plot of land at Amritsar containing a pool, which was enlarged and improved and on the side of which was constructed a famous Sikh temple. It was during Rāmdās' pontificate that the succession to the spiritual headship of the Sikhs became hereditary. The fifth Guru, Arjan Mal (1581–1606), was a man of great organising capacity. Under him the Sikh community grew in numbers and spread far and wide over the Punjab. He compiled the *Ādi Granth*, or "the First Sacred Book", as the original Sikh scripture is called, by collecting select verses from the works of his four predecessors as well as from those of the Hindu and Muhammadan saints who had appeared since the days of Jaidev. He did his best to consolidate the Church, and the prestige and wealth of the Guru increased considerably. As a contemporary remarked: "The Emperor (Akbar) and Kings bow before him. Wealth ever cometh to him." His predecessors had been content with the "fluctuating voluntary offerings" of their disciples, but Guru Arjan tried to organise the finances of his Church by introducing the system of a more or less compulsory "spiritual tribute" to be collected by a band of his agents called *masands*. The early Gurus were religious preachers and did not interfere in politics, but Guru Arjan gave his blessings to the rebel prince Khusrav. Jahāngīr, who had probably grown suspicious of the Guru for his great wealth and influence, put him to death in 1606 on a charge of treason. This must have offended the Sikhs, whose hostility to the Mughul Empire was not, however, openly manifested at this time. The next Guru, Har Govind (1606–1645), son of Arjan, was a man of warlike and adventurous spirit, and gathered a small army round him. Though employed under Jahāngīr, he had to undergo twelve years' imprisonment in Gwālior for his refusal to pay the arrears of the fine that had been imposed on his father. He rose against Shāh Jahān and defeated an imperial army at Sangrāma near Amritsar in 1628. But he was ultimately overpowered and forced to take refuge at Kiratpur in the Kāshmīr Hills, where he died in 1645 after nominating his younger grandson, Har Rāi (1645–1661), as his successor. Har Rāi was followed in the Guruship,

after his death in 1661, by his second son, Har Kishan (1661–1664). Nothing important happened during the regimes of these two Gurus, but "the fiscal policy of Arjan, and the armed system of his son, had already formed the Sikhs into a kind of separate state within the empire"

Har Kishan died in 1664, and after some quarrels about succession to the Guruship, Teg Bahādur, second son of Har Govind, the sixth Guru, was recognised as the spiritual head of the community by most of the Sikhs. He settled at Ānandpur, six miles from Kiratpur. He lived for a few months at Patna in Bihār, where his son, Guru Govind, was born (A.D. 1666). He joined Rājā Rām Singh, son of Mīrzā Rājā Jai Singh, in the Assam war (A.D. 1668), but soon returned to his original abode at Ānandpur and was drawn into hostilities with the imperial government. He protested against certain measures of the Emperor and encouraged the Brāhmaṇas of Kāshmīr to resist these. This was too much for Aurangzeb to tolerate. He caused the Sikh divine to be arrested and brought over to Delhi, where he was offered the choice between death and conversion. Teg Bahādur preferred his faith to his life and was executed after five days (A.D. 1675). Thus he gave his head but not his faith (*sir diā sar na diā*). The martyrdom of the Guru inspired the Sikhs with feelings of revenge against the Mughul Empire and made an open war inevitable. The son and successor of Teg Bahādur, Guru Govind, was one of the most remarkable personalities in Indian history. He set himself to the task of organising his followers with the thoroughness "of a Grecian law-giver". He instituted the custom of baptism (*Pahul*) by water stirred with a dagger. Those who accepted the new form of baptism were known as the Khalsa (pure) and were given the appellation of *Singhs* (lions). They had to wear the five *Ks— kes* (long hair), *kangha* (comb), *kripān* (sword), *kachcha* (short drawers), and *kara* (steel bracelet). They were not to show their backs to the foe in battle. They were ever to help the poor and the unfortunate. Guru Govind compiled a supplementary *Granth*, known as the *Daswen Padshah kā Granth* ('the Book of the Tenth Sovereign'). He fought against some neighbouring hill-princes and Mughul officers with remarkable courage and tenacity. It is said that he assisted Bāhādur in his contest for the throne, and subsequently proceeded with him to the Deccan. An Afghān fanatic stabbed him to death, towards the end of 1708, at Nandur on the banks of the Godāvarī.

C. The Rājput War

The comparatively minor anti-imperial risings were suppressed by Aurangzeb. But more formidable revolts, also originating as a sort of reaction against the Emperor's policy, produced disastrous consequences for his Empire. Failing to realise the value of the alliance of the Rājputs, who had previously contributed so much to the growth of the Empire, he introduced a change in the policy of the State towards them. Rājā Jay Singh of Amber, whom he considered to be a powerful leader of Rājput opposition against his own policy, lost his life in the Deccan in 1667.

The conquest of Mārwār next engaged his attention from more than one consideration. It occupied a position of strategic importance as controlling certain military and commercial routes from the Mughul capital to the rich cities and ports in Western India. Further, its position as a powerful military State in Northern India at that time was a standing annoyance to Aurangzeb. He suspected that its chief, Jaswant Singh, formerly a partisan of Dārā Shukoh, might stand forth as the leader of opposition to his policy.

The Emperor soon had a favourable opportunity to give effect to his designs against Mārwār. While commanding the Mughul frontier posts in the Khyber Pass and the Peshāwār district, Rājā Jaswant Singh died at Jamrūd on the 10th December, 1678. On hearing this news Aurangzeb forthwith took steps to annex Mārwār. He appointed there his own officers as *faujdār*, *qilādār*, *kotwāl* and *amīn*, and brought it under direct Mughul rule. The Rāthors, thrown into confusion and dismay by the death of their chief, failed to present any united national resistance. In the month of May, Indra Singh Rāthor, the chieftain of Nagor and grand-nephew of Jaswant, was recognised as the Rānā of Jodhpur on payment of a "succession fee" of thirty-six lacs of rupees. But he was nothing more than a nominal ruler, surrounded by Mughul officers.

Thus the Emperor's policy seemed to have been crowned with success. But Mārwār was not really subdued. Every Rājput house in that kingdom became determined to undo the imperial *coup de main*, and "a new factor now entered the scene to disturb and eventually to defeat the imperial policy". Already in the month of February, 1679, two posthumous sons of Jaswant were born at Lahore. One of them died soon after birth, but the other, Ajit Singh, survived and was taken to Delhi by the principal followers of his father, who requested the Emperor to recognise him as

heir to the deceased Rājā. But the Emperor offered to bring him up in his harem, or, according to another contemporary account, "the throne of Jodhpur was offered to Ajit on condition of his turning a Muslim". This extraordinary proposal of the Emperor severely wounded the feelings of the Rāthors, who vowed to sacrifice their lives rather than accept these terms. But devotion and reckless courage only could be of no avail against the organised strength of the imperialists. Luckily for the Rāthors, they had, at this critical moment, a worthy leader in Durgādās (a son of Jaswant's minister Askaran), "the flower of Rāthor chivalry".

In the history of Rājputāna, Durgādās is justly regarded as one of the immortals for his selfless devotion to the cause of his country in the face of terrible odds. "Mughul gold could not seduce, Mughul arms could not daunt, that constant heart. Almost alone among the Rāthors he displayed the rare combination of the dash and reckless valour of a Rājput soldier with the tact, diplomacy and organising power of a Mughul minister of state." A band of "death-loving" Rājputs rushed upon the imperial force that had been sent to seize the Rānīs and Ajit Singh, and, taking advantage of the prevailing confusion, Durgādās rode away with the intended victims, clad in male attire. He covered nine miles before the imperialists could overtake him, but here a small band of Rājputs under Ranchordās Jodha tried to hold back the pursuers as long as they could, and Durgādās was able to reach Jodhpur on the 23rd July, 1679, with the Rānīs and Ajit. Aurangzeb now called up heavy reinforcements from different provinces, and the three princes, Mu'azzam, 'A'zam and Akbar, were placed in command of separate divisions of the army. He himself marched to Ajmer in August, 1679, to direct the military operations. Jodhpur was captured and pillaged.

But this aggressive policy of the Mughul Emperor led the brave Sisodiās of Mewār to join the desperate Rāthors of Mārwār. Rānā Rāj Singh of Mewār was a relative of Ajit Singh, whose mother was a Sisodiā princess. He also considered that the annexation of Mārwār exposed Mewār to the danger of Mughul conquest. Further, the revival of the *jizya*, after many years, incensed him highly. Through the Rāthor–Sisodiā alliance, the Rājput war assumed the aspect of a national rising in defence of liberty.

Aurangzeb at once invaded Mewār, but the Rānā, considering it unwise to meet face to face the superior strength of the Mughuls, deserted the towns and hamlets of Mewār and retired with all his subjects to mountain fastnesses after laying waste

the plains below. The Mughuls easily occupied Chitor. Sure of success, the Emperor started for Ajmer, leaving a strong force in Chitor under Prince Akbar. But he was soon disillusioned. The Rājputs carried on a guerilla warfare and fell on the Mughul outposts with so much courage that "the command of Mughul outposts went a-begging, captain after captain declining the dangerous honour and offering excuses". Emboldened by their successes, the Rājputs surprised the Mughul army under Prince Akbar in May, 1690, and carried off its provisions. Reduced to starvation, the imperial army stood "motionless through fear", as Prince Akbar complained. Holding Prince Akbar responsible for this discomfiture, the Emperor placed the command of the army at Chitor in the hands of Prince 'A'zam and sent Akbar to Mārwār.

Smarting under the disgrace of his removal, Prince Akbar dreamt of wresting the crown of Delhi from his father in alliance with the Rājputs, whose worth he must have sufficiently understood during his war with them. The Rājput chiefs pointed out to him how his father's policy was destroying the stability of the Mughul Empire, and hoping thus to "place a truly national king on the throne of Delhi they promised to back him with the armed strength of the two greatest Rājput clans, the Sisodiās and the Rāthors". With his army of about 70,000 men, "including the best blood of Rājputāna", Prince Akbar arrived near Ajmer on the 15th January, 1681. Auranzgeb's situation was then critical, as the two main divisions of his army were quartered near Chitor and the Rājsamudra lake. Had the Prince promptly utilised this "fine opportunity", the Emperor might have been caught at a disadvantage. But he whiled away his time in indolence and pleasure and thus allowed his shrewd father to make preparations to defend himself. By writing a letter to his rebellious son, which the Emperor contrived should reach the Rājputs, he led Akbar's allies to believe that the Mughul Prince was playing false with them. The stratagem of the Emperor proved successful, as the Rājput allies of Prince Akbar, suspecting treachery, deserted him and he hurriedly "rode away for dear life in the track of the Rājputs". The Rājputs, however, soon discovered the fraud played on them, and the chivalrous Rāthor chief, Durgādās, convinced of the Prince's innocence, gallantly saved him from his father's vengeance and escorted him, through Khāndesh and Baglāna, to the court of the Marātha king, Shambhūjī. But the self-indulgent successor of Shivājī could afford no effective aid to the fugitive Mughul prince, whose dream of an Indian Empire, "based on Hindu-Muslim reconciliation

and amity, remained an idle one". About six years later the disappointed Mughul prince set out for Persia, where he died in A.D. 1704.

Though Prince Akbar's rebellion could not change the ruler of Delhi, it gave great relief to the Rānā of Mewār, but his temporary success against the Mughuls caused great misery to his subjects. The sufferings of the Mughuls had also been considerable, and they could not gain any definite success against the Rājputs. These considerations led the Emperor and the Rānā, Jay Singh, son and successor of Rāj Singh, to conclude a treaty in June, 1681. The Rānā ceded a few districts in lieu of *jizya* and the Mughuls withdrew from Mewār. Mārwār, however, had to continue a "thirty years' war" before a peace was concluded on honourable terms. Under the able leadership of Durgādās, the Rāthors ceaselessly carried on a guerilla warfare and harassed the Mughul outposts so that the Mughul officers were compelled to pay *chauth* to their unrelenting foe to save themselves from his aggression. The war dragged on till, after Aurangzeb's death, his son and successor, Bahādur Shāh I, recognised Ajit Singh as the Rānā of Mārwār in A.D. 1709.

The Rājput wars of Aurangzeb produced disastrous consequences for his Empire. Thousands of lives were sacrificed and enormous sums were wasted on the desert land without any lasting success to the Emperor. "Damaging as this result was to imperial prestige, its material consequences were worse still." It was an act of political unwisdom on the part of Aurangzeb to provoke Rājput hostility and thus forfeit the devoted service of gallant chiefs and soldiers, so long friends of the Empire, in his wasting wars in the Deccan, or in the important work of holding under control the north-western frontier, where the restless Afghān tribes were still far from being pacified.

8. Aurangzeb and the Deccan

During the first half of Aurangzeb's reign his attention was engrossed with affairs in the north, and the Deccan was left to the viceroys. The decadent southern Sultānates had not been able to recover fully from the blows that had been inflicted on them, and the Marāthas rose at their expense. The rise of the Marāthas, as a sort of challenge to the Mughul Empire, complicated the political situation in the Deccan, the full significance of which the Emperor could not realise at first. During the first twenty-four years of his reign his viceroys in the Deccan could

achieve no definite success either against the Sultānates or against the Marāthas.

The death of Shivājī in 1680 in no way improved the imperial position in the Deccan, notwithstanding Aurangzeb's determination to consolidate his supremacy. The flight of the rebellious Prince Akbar to the Marātha king, Shambhūjī, and the alliance between the "disturber of India" and the "infernal son of the infernal father", as Aurangzeb called these two, brought a complete change in his policy towards the Deccan. Having now realised the necessity of marching there in person to check this menace to imperial interests, he patched up a peace with Mewār in June, 1681. Leaving Ajmer for the Deccan on the 8th September, 1681, he arrived at Burhānpur on 23rd November, 1681, and at Ahmadnagar on the 1st April, 1682. His mind must have been full of high hopes, and he could not foresee that destiny was dragging him to the south to dig the graves of himself and his Empire. The first four years were spent in unsuccessful attempts to seize Prince Akbar and in rather disastrous campaigns against the Marāthas. Some of the forts of the latter were conquered by the imperialists, but the sturdy folk whom Shivājī had inspired with new aspirations could not be thoroughly suppressed.

The conquest of the decayed Sultānates next engaged the Emperor's attention. As in the case of Shāh Jahān, Aurangzeb's attitude towards the Shiah Sultānates of the Deccan was influenced partly by imperial interests and partly by religious considerations. Bijāpur, weakened by party factions and the rise of the Marāthas, submitted to the invaders. The last Mughul siege of the city began on the 11th April, 1685, and the Emperor himself went there in July, 1686. The besieged garrison held out gallantly, but, exhausted by lack of provisions and the death of countless men and horses, caused by the outbreak of a famine, they capitulated in September, 1686. Sikandar, the last of the 'Ādil Shāhīs, surrendered to the Emperor and the dynasty founded by Yūsuf 'Ādil Shāh ceased to exist. On entering Bijāpur the Emperor destroyed all the fine paintings and frescoes in Sikandar's palace. Bijāpur not only lost its independence, but was turned into a desolate city. "A few years later," writes Sir J. N. Sarkar, "Bhīmsen noticed how the city and its equally large suburb Nauraspur looked deserted and ruined; the population was scattered, and even the abundant water-supply in the city wells had suddenly grown scanty."

Next came the turn of the Qutb Shāhī kingdom of Golkundā. Early in February, 1687, Aurangzeb himself appeared before

Golkundā and the Mughul troops besieged the local fortress within a few days. But the citadel was well stocked with food and ammunition, which enabled the besieged to hold out bravely for about eight months. In spite of using every possible means—mines, bombardments and escalades—the besiegers could achieve no definite success but were harassed by famine and pestilence and incurred heavy losses from the reprisals of their enemies. Aurangzeb, however, held on with grim tenacity and gathered fresh reinforcements. On the failure of valour and arms, Aurangzeb, following the example of Akbar before Asīrgarh, made use of "the golden key" to capture Golkundā. An Afghān soldier of fortune named 'Abdullah Pani, then employed in the service of Abul Hasan, the Sultān of Golkundā, was suborned by the Emperor and allowed the Mughuls to pour into the fort by opening its main gate. But one faithful Golkundā noble, 'Abdur Razzāq Lārī, spurned the Emperor's tempting offers of money and fought single-handed till he fell covered with seventy wounds. He was nursed back to recovery by the Mughuls and at last accepted a high rank under the Emperor. 'Abul Hasan was sent off to the fortress of Daulatābād to spend his last days on a pension of Rs. 50,000 a year, and Golkundā was annexed (September, 1687) to the Mughul Empire.

According to writers like Elphinstone and Smith, the annihilation of the Southern Sultānates was an impolitic step on the part of Aurangzeb. They hold that it "freed the Marātha chiefs from any fear of local rivalry", which the Mughul Emperor might have utilised to his advantage against the Marāthas. But it is doubtful if any sincere alliance between the Sultānates and their aggressor, the Mughul Emperor, was possible and also if they could check the rise of the Marāthas. As Sir J. N. Sarkar observes, "since Akbar had crossed the Vindhyas, the Deccan Sultānates could never forget that the sleepless aim of the Mughul Emperors was the final extinction and annexation of all their territories". He also points out that it would have been impossible for the decadent Sultānates to check the Marāthas effectively as they had already organised themselves into a progressive national State.

Having achieved one of the two objects of his Deccan policy, that is, the annexation of the decadent Sultānates of the Deccan, Aurangzeb turned towards the other, that is, the suppression of the renascent Marātha power. His attempts were at first crowned with success. Shambhūjī was executed on the 11th March, 1689, his capital Rāigarh was captured, and though his brother, Rājārām, escaped, the rest of his family, including his young son,

Shāhū, were made prisoners. The Emperor extended his conquest further south and levied tribute on the Hindu States of Tanjore and Trichinopoly.

Thus by the year 1690 Aurangzeb reached the zenith of his power and was the lord paramount of almost the whole of India—from Kābul to Chittagong and from Kāshmīr to the Kāverī. "All seemed to have been gained by Aurangzeb now; but in reality all was lost. It was the beginning of his end. The saddest and most hopeless chapter of his life was now opened. The Mughul Empire had become too large to be governed by one man or from one centre. . His enemies rose on all sides; he could defeat but not crush them for ever. . . . Lawlessness reigned in many places of Northern and Central India. The old Emperor in the far-off Deccan lost all control over his officers in Hindustān, and the administration grew slack and corrupt; chiefs and zamindārs defied the local authorities and asserted themselves, filling the country with tumult. In the province of Āgra in particular, there was chronic disorder. Art and learning decayed at the withdrawal of Imperial patronage; not a single edifice, finely written manuscript, or exquisite picture, commemorates Aurangzeb's reign. The endless war in the Deccan exhausted his treasury; the government turned bankrupt, the soldiers, starving from arrears of pay, mutinied; and during the closing years of his reign the revenue of Bengal, regularly sent by the able *dīwān* Murshid Qulī Khān, was the sole support of the Emperor's household or his army, and its arrival was eagerly looked forward to. Napoleon I used to say, 'It was the Spanish ulcer which ruined me'. The Deccan ulcer ruined Aurangzeb." The Emperor failed to subjugate the Marāthas or conquer their land. They recovered by 1691 and carried on a war of national resistance against the Mughuls, first under Rājārām and some other able Marātha chiefs, and then, after Rājārām's death in 1700, under his brave widow Tārā Bāī.

9. Last Days of Aurangzeb

Thus, as years rolled on, Aurangzeb saw before his eyes failure piled upon failure and his Empire exhausted. Fear for the future of the Empire filled his mind with anguish, and made him extremely unhappy. His advice to his rebellious sons to save the Empire by partition went unheeded. Conscious of his failure and seriously apprehensive of the imminent disaster, he wrote to his son 'A'zam: "I came alone and am going alone. I have not done well to the country and the people, and of the future there is no hope." To

Kām Bakhsh he wrote: "I carry away the burden of my shortcomings. . . . Come what may, I am launching my boat." The deep pathos of these letters is bound to move every human heart and to rouse in it sympathy for the old monarch on his "lonely death-bed". Worn out in mind and body by heavy cares and hard toil, the Emperor died at Ahmadnagar in the morning of the 3rd March, 1707, "with the Muslim confession of faith on his lips". His body was carried to Daulatābād and was interred in the compound of the tomb of the famous Muslim saint Burhān-ud-dīn.

10. Aurangzeb as a Man and a Ruler

To judge the character and policy of a personality like Aurangzeb is indeed a perplexing task. Some have taken into consideration mainly his faults, and not his good qualities, which they have mostly ignored. There is no reason why he should be singled out for severe strictures for the manner in which he secured the throne. In this, he was simply following the example that had become almost traditional in the Tīmūrīd family in India. It would be unjust to throw on him the entire responsibility for the war of succession; it would have come at any rate, as none of the brothers was willing to make any compromise. It should not be forgotten that while Shāh Jahān removed all his possible rivals Aurangzeb did not put to death all his nephews. It is indeed hard to defend Aurangzeb's harsh treatment of his old father, but in justice to him it should be noted that at least he was not a parricide, of which we find numerous instances in the history of India and of other countries.

Aurangzeb's private life was simple, pious and austere. He was not a slave to his passions and scrupulously abstained from indulging in prohibited food, drink or dress. The number of his wives "fell short even of the Quranic allowance of four", which was a praiseworthy restraint for an Emperor in those days, though it was below the standard of Dārā Shukoh and Khusrav. He was an ardent student of Muslim theology, and an expert calligraphist, and tried to "educate his children in sacred lore". But it is a pity that he seldom encouraged art and letters. The only literary production which received his patronage was the *Fatāwa-i-'Ālamgīrī*, which has been regarded as "the greatest digest of Muslim law made in India". Aurangzeb was a pious Muslim, and with the zeal of a Puritan he scrupulously observed the injunctions of the Holy Quran. Once during the Balkh campaign he knelt down to finish his prayers at the proper time, though the fighting

was going on all around him. No one can deny him the credit of being sincere in his religious convictions. But this extreme puritanism made him stern and austere and dried up the springs of the tender qualities of heart. He thus "lacked sympathy, imagination, breadth of vision, elasticity in the choice of means, which atone for a hundred faults of the head".

Undaunted bravery, grim tenacity of purpose, and ceaseless activity, were some of his prominent qualities. His military campaigns give sufficient proof of his unusual courage, and the manner in which he baffled the intrigues of his enemies shows him to have been a past-master of diplomacy and state-craft. His memory was wonderful, and his industry indefatigable. He personally read all petitions and passed orders on them with his own hand. The Italian physician Gemelli-Careri, who visited India during the reign of Aurangzeb and saw him in 1695 when he was seventy-seven years old, "admired to see him endorse the petitions with his own hand, without spectacles, and by his cheerful, smiling countenance seemed to be extremely pleased with the employment".

In spite of his vitality and strength of character, Aurangzeb, as a ruler of India, proved to be a failure. He hardly realised that the greatness of an Empire depends on the progress of its people as a whole. In the intensity of his religious zeal he ignored the feelings of important sections of the people and thus roused forces hostile to his Empire. Indeed, the history of India since the days of the Mauryas clearly shows that political progress in this land is dependent on the policy of religious toleration which would seek to create harmony in the midst of various discordant elements. To build up a united India, while accentuating religious differences, is bound to remain an idle dream. Further, Aurangzeb's plodding industry and capacity for work in one sense went against him by implanting in his mind a sense of over-confidence, and excessive distrust of his officers. This led him to interfere constantly in the minutest affairs of the State. It resulted in keeping the local officers in a state of perpetual tutelage, and crushing their initiative, sense of responsibility, and efficiency, which could not but produce "administrative degeneration in an extensive and diversified empire like India". Khāfī Khān gives the following estimate of the Emperor from the point of view of an orthodox Sunnī: "Of all the sovereigns of the House of Tīmūr —nay of all the sovereigns of Delhi—no one, since Sikandar Lodī, has ever been apparently so distinguished for devotion, austerity and justice. In courage, long-suffering and sound judgment, he was unrivalled. But from reverence of the injunction of the Law

he did not make use of punishment, and without punishment the administration of a country cannot be maintained. Dissensions had arisen among his nobles through rivalry. So every plan and project that he formed came to little good and every enterprise which he undertook was long in execution and failed of its object." Aurangzeb had many sterling qualities; but he was not a successful ruler; he was a great soldier but not a farseeing leader of men, a shrewd diplomat but not a sound statesman. In short, he was not a political genius, such as Akbar alone among the Mughuls had been, who could initiate a policy and enact laws to mould the life and thought of his contemporaries or of future generations. Largely owing to the Emperor's lack of political foresight, the symptoms of the disintegration of the Mughul Empire appeared before he left this world. His weak successors only hastened the process of decay. The reign of the puritan Emperor was a great tragedy.

II. The Marāthas and the Mughuls in the Seventeenth Century

A. Rise of the Marāthas

The rise of the Marātha power introduced an important factor in Indian politics during the second half of the seventeenth century, as that of Vijayanagar had done in a previous age. The Marāthas had brilliant traditions of political and cultural activities in the early Middle Ages of Indian history, when they upheld the national cause under the Yādavas of Devagiri. They lost their independence with the fall of the Yādava Rāmchandradeva in the time of 'Ālā-ud-dīn, but in forty years they began again to play an important part in the Bahmanī kingdom and subsequently in the succeeding Sultānates. The seventeenth century saw them organised into a national State. There is no doubt that Shivājī was the hero of this Marātha national unity, but it has to be noted that the ground was prepared for his glorious achievements by several other factors.

Firstly, the geography of Mahārāshtra exercised a profound influence in moulding the character and history of its people. Enclosed on two sides by mountain ranges like the Sahyadrī running from north to south, and the Sātpura and the Vindhya running from east to west, protected by the Narmadā and the Tāptī rivers and provided with numerous easily defensible hill-forts, the Marātha country "could not be annexed or conquered by one cavalry dash or even one year's campaigning". The

rugged and unproductive soil of the land, its precarious and scanty rainfall, and its meagre agricultural resources, kept the Marāthas immune from the vices of luxury and idleness and helped them to develop the virtues of "self-reliance, courage, perseverance, a stern simplicity, a rough straight-forwardness, a sense of social equality, and consequently pride in the dignity of man as man". Secondly, the Marāthī religious reformers, Ekanāth, Tukārām, Rāmdās and Vāman Pandit, preaching, through successive centuries, the doctrines of devotion to God and of equality of all men before Him, without any distinction of caste or position, and the dignity of action, had sown in their land the seeds of a renaissance or self-awakening which is generally the presage of a political revolution in a country. Rāmdās Samarth, Guru of Shivājī, exerted a profound influence on the minds of his countrymen and inspired them with ideals of social reform and national regeneration through his disciples in *maths* (monasteries) and his famous work known as *Dasabodha*. Thirdly, literature and language supplied another bond of union among the sons of Mahārāshtra. The devotional songs of religious reformers were composed in the Marāthī language, and consequently a forceful Marāthī literature grew up during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to inspire the people of the land with noble aspirations. "Thus," observes Sir J. N. Sarkar, "a remarkable community of language, creed and life was attained in Mahārāshtra in the seventeenth century even before political unity was conferred by Shivājī. What little was wanting to the solidarity of the people was supplied by his creation of a national State, the long struggle with the invader from Delhi under his sons, and the imperial expansion of the race under the Peshwās."

The Marāthas had also acquired some previous experience of political and military administration through their employment in the Sultānates of the Deccan. Shāhjī, father of the famous Shivājī, began his career as a trooper in the army of the Sultān of Ahmadnagar. He gradually rose to distinction, acquired vast territorial possessions in that State, and played the kingmaker during the last years of the Nizām Shāhī rule. But his success excited the jealousy of others, and after the annexation of Ahmadnagar by Shāh Jahān, he entered the service of the Bijāpur State in 1636. Here also he earned considerable fame and received an extensive fief in the Karnātak, besides his old *jāgīr* of Poona, which he had held as a servant of the Ahmadnagar State.

B. Shivājī's Career

Shivājī was born in the hill-fort of Shivner near Junnar in 1630, as the writers of one school hold, or in 1627, as some modern historians say.[1] Shāhjī removed to his new *jāgīr* with his second wife, leaving Shivājī and his mother Jijā Bāī under the guardianship of an able Brāhmaṇa, Dādāji Khonddev. Neglected by her husband, Jijā Bāī, a lady of virtuous temperament and extraordinary intellect, infused into her child's mind high and inspiring ideas by reciting stories of heroism, spirituality and chivalry in past ages, and stimulated his zeal in defence of religion. "If ever great men owed their greatness to the inspiration of mothers", wrote Ranade, "the influence of Jijā Bāī was a factor of prime importance in the making of Shivājī's career." The influence of Dādāji Khonddev also combined to make him bold and enterprising. We do not know if Shivājī received any formal literary education, but he grew up as a brave and adventurous soldier, "inspired by a real desire to free his country from what he considered to be a foreign tyranny, and not by a mere love of plunder". His early intimacy with the hillmen of the Māval country, ninety miles in length and about twelve to fourteen miles in breadth along the Western Ghāts, was of immense value to him in his subsequent years, as the Māvalis turned out to be "his best soldiers, his earliest comrades, and his most devoted commanders". Through his mother, he was descended from the Yādava rulers of Devagiri, and on his father's side he claimed descent from the brave Sisodiās of Mewār. Thus the sentiment of glorious heredity, and the influence of early training and environment, combined to rouse in the young Marātha soldier aspirations for founding an independent kingdom. He chose for himself a "career of independence", which, though full of risk, "had undreamt-of advantages to compensate for the risk, if only he could succeed".

The growing weakness of the Deccan Sultānates, and the prolonged campaigns of the imperialists in the north, greatly favoured the rise of the Marātha power. In 1646 Shivājī captured the fortress of Torna, five miles east of which he soon built the fort of Rājgarh. After the death of Dādāji Khonddev (1647), who probably did not approve of these risky enterprises, Shivājī acquired many forts from their hereditary owners, or the local officers of Bijāpur, by

[1] Sarkar's *Shivājī*, p. 25; *J.I.H.*, 1927, pp. 177–97. Mr. Dasaratha Sharma has brought to light (*J.B.O.R.S.*, June, 1934) a contemporary record of Shivājī's birth (that is, a horoscope of Shivājī preserved in the Bikāner Fort Library), according to which Shivājī was born in *Samvat* 1686.

force, bribery or trickery, and also built new ones. He thus came to possess a considerable estate, protected by a long chain of hill-forts. He had to suspend offensive operations against Bijāpur for a few years (1649-1655) as his father was put under arrest by the Bijāpur Government and was released on condition of his son's good behaviour. But he utilised this time in consolidating his conquests, and in January, 1656, annexed the small Marātha principality of Jāvlī, by having its semi-independent Marātha prince, Chandra Rāo More, done to death by one of his agents. The extent and revenue of Shivājī's heritage were by this time more than doubled. He came into conflict with the Mughuls for the first time in 1657, when, taking advantage of Aurangzeb and his troops being engaged in the invasion of Bijāpur, he raided the Mughul districts of Ahmadnagar and Junnar and even looted the city of Junnar. Aurangzeb promptly reinforced his officers in that part and Shivājī was defeated. When 'Ādil Shāh concluded peace with Aurangzeb, Shivājī also submitted to him. Aurangzeb never trusted Shivājī, but he patched up the peace as his presence in the north became necessary owing to his father's illness. Shivājī next turned his attention to the North Konkān, captured Kalyān, Bhiwāndī and Māhulī, and proceeded as far south as Māhad.

Temporarily relieved from internal strife and immediate Mughul invasion, the Sultān of Bijāpur decided to destroy the power of Shivājī once for all, and sent a large force against him, early in A.D. 1659, under Afzal Khān, one of the foremost nobles and generals of the kingdom, "to bring back the rebel (Shivājī) dead or alive". Afzal Khān reached Wai, twenty miles north of Sātārā, within a fortnight. Failing to bring Shivājī out of his stronghold of Pratāpgarh, the Bijāpur general opened negotiations with him through a Marātha Brāhmaṇa, named Kṛishṇajī Bhāskar, and invited him to a conference. Shivājī received the envoy with respect, and appealed to him in the name of religion to disclose the real intention of Afzal Khān. Moved by this, Kṛishṇajī Bhāskar hinted that the Bijāpur general had mischief in his mind, which was confirmed by what Shivājī learnt from Gopināth, his own envoy to Afzal. This put Shivājī on the alert, and he proceeded to meet his adversary in a conference, apparently unarmed but with concealed weapons and clad in armour, with a view to meeting craft with craft if necessary. It has been unanimously alleged by the Marāthas that, as the two embraced each other, the strong and stalwart Muslim general held the short and slim Marātha chief's neck in his left arm with "an iron grip" and with his right hand tried to thrust a dagger into the body of Shivājī, whose hidden armour,

however, saved him from harm. Shivājī immediately killed Afzal by rending his body with his *bāghnakh* or gloves with steel claws. With the help of his troops, who were lying in ambush, he defeated the leaderless Bijāpur troops and plundered their camp. Khāfī Khan and Duff charge Shivājī with having treacherously murdered Afzal Khān, who, in their opinion, did not first try to strike Shivājī. But Marātha writers have justified Shivājī's treatment of Afzal as an act of self-defence against the attack of the Bijāpur general. The contemporary factory records accord with the statement of the Marātha chroniclers.

Shivājī next entered the South Konkan and the Kolhāpur district. But in July, 1660, he was invested in the Panhālā fort by a Bijāpur force under Sīdī Jauhar and was forced to evacuate it. He was soon confronted with a new danger. Shāista Khān, the new Mughul governor of the Deccan, commissioned by Aurangzeb to suppress the Marātha chief's activities, occupied Poona, captured the fort of Chākan and drove away the Marāthas from the Kalyān district. But Shivājī soon patched up a truce with the Bijāpur State, through the intervention of his father, who still held a position of importance there. Thus he became free to turn his whole attention to the Mughuls. After about two years' desultory fighting, he secretly entered into Shāista Khān's apartments in Poona with some attendants on the 15th April, 1663, "surprised and wounded the Mughul viceroy of the Deccan in the heart of his camp, in his very bed-chamber, within the inner ring of his body-guards and female slaves", slew his son, Abul Fath, one captain, forty attendants and six women of his harem, and then went safely away to the neighbouring stronghold of Singhagarh. The Mughul viceroy lost his thumb and barely escaped with his life. This daring exploit immensely increased the prestige of Shivājī, who soon performed another feat, not less adventurous than the one described above. During the period 16th—20th January, 1664, he attacked and sacked Surāt, the richest seaport on the west, without hindrance, as the governor of the place had taken to his heels instead of opposing him. The Marātha chief decamped with rich plunder exceeding ten million rupees in value. Only the local English and Dutch factories successfully resisted him and escaped being plundered.

Indignant at these repeated reverses, which greatly affected Mughul prestige and influence in the Deccan, Aurangzeb sent, early in 1665, Jay Singh, Rājā of Amber, and Dilīr Khān to the Deccan with an expeditionary force to punish Shivājī. Jay Singh, a tactful and brave general, who combined with varied military

experience, gained during his campaigns in different parts of the Empire, much diplomatic skill and foresight, proceeded cautiously against the clever Marātha chief. Raising a ring of enemies round Shivājī, he besieged the fort of Purandhar. The beleaguered garrison in the fort maintained a heroic resistance for some time, during which its "Prabhu" commander, Munar Bājī Deshpānde of Māhad, lost his life with 300 Māvlīs. The Mughuls also blockaded Rājgarh, the seat of Shivājī's government. Considering the cost of further resistance, Shivājī concluded the treaty of Purandhar with Jay Singh on the 22nd June, 1665, whereby he ceded to the Mughuls twenty-three of his forts, retaining only twelve for himself, promised to supply a contingent of 5,000 cavalry to act with the Mughul army in the Deccan, and was permitted to compensate himself for his territorial losses by collecting *chauth* and *sardeshmukhī* in some districts of the Bijāpur kingdom. He soon joined the imperialists in a war against Bijāpur. But Jay Singh's Bijāpur campaign ended in failure. He, however, plied Shivājī "with high hopes", and using "a thousand devices" prevailed upon him to visit the imperial court at Āgra.

Jay Singh's object in sending Shivājī to the imperial court was to remove him from the troubled area of the Deccan, but it is very difficult to understand what led Shivājī to agree to his proposal. Mr. Sardesai writes that the consideration which led Shivājī to go to the imperial court was his desire to see with his own eyes the Emperor, his court, and the sources of his strength, with a view to preparing his plans for future operations against him properly. We know, on the other hand, that Jay Singh had to persuade him to take such a risky step by holding out promises of reward and honour and taking solemn oaths to be responsible for his safety at Āgra. To secure the consent of the Emperor to the occupation of the island of Janjīra, then held by the Sīddī, an imperial servant, might have also been an objective of the Marātha chief. With the assurance of the astrologers and concurrence of the majority of his officers, he started for Āgra with his son, Shambhūjī, and reached there on the 9th May, 1666.

But Shivājī was coldly received by Aurangzeb and ranked as a noble commanding 5,000 men, which wounded his sense of honour so much that he created a scene and swooned. On being restored to his senses, he accused the Emperor of breach of faith, whereupon he was placed under guard. Thus his "high hopes were dashed to pieces and he found himself a prisoner instead". An ordinary man would have given way to despair under such

trying circumstances, but, being gifted with extraordinary resourcefulness, he resorted to a stratagem to effect his escape. Pretending to recover from his feigned illness, he began sending out of his house every evening baskets of fruits and sweetmeats for Brāhmaṇas, mendicants and nobles, as thanksgiving offerings for his fictitious recovery. After a few days, when the guards had relaxed their vigilance and allowed the baskets to go out unchecked, Shivājī and his son concealed themselves in two empty baskets and slipped out of Āgra, eluding all the spies of the Mughul Emperor. He



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hastened with Shambhūjī to Muttrā and, leaving his fatigued son there in charge of a Marātha Brāhmaṇa, reached home, in the guise of a mendicant, on the 30th November, 1666, by following a roundabout way, via Allahābād, Benares, Gayā and Telingāna.

For three years after this, Shivājī remained at peace with the Mughuls and utilised the period in organising his internal administration. Aurangzeb granted him the title of *Rājā* and a *jāgīr* in Berar, and raised his son Shambhūjī to the rank of a noble of 5,000. But war was renewed in 1670. The position of the imperialists being weaker than before, owing to a bitter quarrel between the viceroy,

Shāh 'Ālam, and his lieutenant, Dilīr Khān, Shivājī recovered almost all the forts surrendered by him in 1665. In the month of October, 1670, he sacked Surāt for the second time and captured immense booty in cash and kind. He then carried daring raids into Mughul provinces and repeatedly defeated Mughul generals in open fight. In 1672 he demanded *chauth* from Surāt.

The tribal risings in the north-west then engaged Aurangzeb's attention more than anything else, and a part of the Mughul army was transferred from the Deccan to that region. The desultory fighting of the Mughul captains against Shivājī from 1672 to 1678 led to no success. The Marātha hero was then in the full tide of power. On the 16th June, 1674, he formally crowned himself king at Rāigarh with great pomp and splendour, and assumed the title of *Chhatrapati* (Lord of the Umbrella, or king of kings).

Besides being relieved of pressure from the Mughuls, owing to their preoccupations in the north-west, Shivājī secured the friendship of the Sultān of Golkundā, and conquered in one year (1677) Jinjī, Vellore, and the adjoining districts. These greatly enhanced his prestige and gave him the possession of a vast territory in the Madras Carnatic and the Mysore plateau, covering sixty leagues by forty, yielding him an annual revenue of 20 lacs of *huns* and containing 100 forts. His successful career came to a close with his premature death at the age of fifty-three (or fifty, according to some) on the 14th April, 1680. Shivājī's kingdom extended roughly along the entire coast from Rāmnagar (modern Dharampur State in the Surāt Agency) in the north to Kārwār in the south, excluding the Portuguese, African and English settlements of Damān, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul, Goa, Janjīra and Bombay. On the east, its boundary ran in an irregular line from Baglāna in the north, through the Nāsik and Poona districts and round the whole of Sātārā, to Kolhāpur in the south. His last conquests brought within the limits of his dominions the Western Carnatic, extending from Belgaum to the banks of the Tuṅgabhadrā, opposite to the Bellary district of the modern Madras Presidency, and also a large part of the present kingdom of Mysore.

C. Shivājī's Government

Shivājī was not merely a daring soldier and a successful military conqueror, but also an enlightened ruler of his people. As Mr. Rawlinson observes: "Like nearly all great warriors—Napoleon is a conspicuous example—Shivājī was also a great administrator, for the qualities which go to make a capable general are those

which are required by the successful organiser and statesman." His system, like that of the Muslim rulers of India, was an autocracy, of which he himself was the supreme head. But in the actual discharge of State business he was helped by a council of eight ministers—the *ashtapradhān*—whose functions were chiefly advisory. The eight ministers were: (i) The *Peshwā* or the Prime Minister, who had to look after the general welfare and interests of the kingdom, (ii) the *Amātya* or the Finance Minister, whose duty was to check and countersign all public accounts, (iii) the *Mantrī*, who had to preserve a daily record of the king's acts and the proceedings of his court, (iv) the *Sachiva* or the superintendent, who was in charge of the king's correspondence and had also to check the accounts of the *mahāls* and *paraganās*, (v) the *Sumant* or the Foreign Secretary, (vi) the *Senāpati* or the Commander-in-chief, (vii) the *Pandit Rāo* and *Dānādhyaksha* or the Royal Chaplain and Almoner, and (viii) the *Nyāyādhīsa* or the Chief Justice. All the ministers, excepting the *Nyāyādhīsa* and the *Pandit Rāo*, held military commands besides their civil duties, and at least three of them were placed in charge of provincial administration as well. The ministers were in charge of different departments of the State, which were no less than thirty in number. Shivājī divided his kingdom into a number of provinces, each being placed under a viceroy, who held office at the king's pleasure and was assisted like him by a staff of eight chief officers. The viceroy of the Karnātak had a position somewhat different from that of the other provincial governors, and he exercised more power and discretion.

For purposes of revenue collection and administration, Shivājī's kingdom was divided into a number of *prants* or provinces. Each *prant* was subdivided into *paraganās* and *tarfs*, and the village formed the lowest unit. Shivājī abandoned the existing practice of farming out land revenue and substituted for it direct collection from the ryots through State officials, who had "no right to exercise the powers of a political superior (overlord) or harass the ryots". The assessment was made after a careful survey of lands, for which purpose a uniform unit of measurement was introduced. The State dues were fixed at 30 per cent of the expected produce, which was after some time raised by Shivājī to 40 per cent after he had abolished other kinds of taxes or cesses. The cultivators knew definitely the amount of their dues, which they could pay without any oppression. They were given the choice of payment either in cash or in kind. The State encouraged agriculture by granting advance loans from the treasury to the ryots for the purchase of

seed and cattle, and the latter repaid these by easy annual instalments. It is wrong to say, as Fryer has done, that the State officers practised extortions and oppressions on the cultivators, though it might have been that Shivājī, with a view to making his kingdom financially sound, was strict in the matter of revenue collection. Modern researches have amply proved that the revenue administration of Shivājī was humane, efficient, and conducive to the interests of his subjects, as even Grant Duff admitted many years ago.

As the hilly regions of Mahārāshtra did not yield much in land revenue, Shivājī often levied *chauth* and *sardeshmukhī* on the neighbouring tracts, which were completely at his mercy, and also on the Mughul provinces as well as some districts of the Bijāpur kingdom. The practice of levying *chauth* had already been in vogue in western India, as we find that the Rājā of Rāmnagar exacted it from the Portuguese subjects of Damān. Scholars differ in their opinions regarding the nature of the *chauth* contribution. Ranade, who compares it with Wellesley's subsidiary system, writes that it was "not a mere military contribution without any moral or legal obligation, but a payment in lieu of protection against the invasion of a third power". Sir J. N. Sarkar expresses a different opinion when he writes: "The payment of the *chauth* merely saved a place from the unwelcome presence of the Marātha soldiers and civil underlings, but did not impose on Shivājī any corresponding obligation to guard the district from foreign invasion or internal disorder. The Marāthas looked only to their own gain and not to the fate of their prey after they had left. The *chauth* was only a means of buying off one robber; and not a subsidiary system for the maintenance of peace and order against all enemies. The lands subject to the *chauth* cannot, therefore, be rightly called spheres of influence." According to Mr. Sardesai, it was a tribute realised from hostile or conquered territories. Dr. Sen writes that the *chauth* was a contribution exacted by a military leader, which was justified by the exigencies of the situation. Whatever might be the theory of this burdensome imposition, which amounted to one-fourth of the government revenue, in practice it was nothing but a military contribution. The *sardeshmukhī* was an additional levy of 10 per cent, which Shivājī demanded on the basis of his claim as the hereditary *Sardeshmukh* (chief headman) of Mahārāshtra. But this was a legal fiction. The exaction of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhī* gave to the Marāthas influence over the districts which lay beyond their jurisdiction and was followed by their easy annexation.

The organisation of the Marātha army by Shivājī on a new model is a brilliant proof of his military genius. Previously the Marātha fighting forces consisted mostly of cavalry, who had been in the habit of working half the year upon their fields, and engaged themselves during the dry season in active service. Shivājī, however, introduced a regular standing army. His soldiers had to be always ready for duty, and were provided with pay and quarters during the rainy season. The strength of this force rose from thirty to forty thousand cavalry and ten thousand infantry. Shivājī built a considerable fleet, the crews for which were recruited from among the low-caste Hindus of the Bombay coast. Although the achievements of the Marātha navy under Shivājī were not very remarkable, yet in later times the Marātha fleet under the Angrias gave considerable trouble to the English, the Portuguese, and the Dutch. According to the *Sabhāsad Bakhar*, he maintained an elephant corps numbering about 1,260 and a camel corps numbering 3,000 or 1,500. We do not know definitely what was the strength of his artillery, but Orme writes that "he had previously purchased eighty pieces of cannon and lead sufficient for his matchlocks from the French Director at Surāt".

There was a regular gradation of officers both in the cavalry and the infantry. The cavalry had two branches—the *bargīs* or soldiers provided with pay and equipment by the State, and the *silāhdārs*, who equipped themselves at their own cost and supplied the pay and equipment of the soldiers whom they brought to the service of the State, but were paid a stipulated sum by the State to defray the expense of service in the field. In the cavalry, 25 troopers formed a unit; over twenty-five men was placed a *havaldār*, over five *havaldārs* one *jumlādār*, and over ten *jumlādārs* one *hāzārī*, who received 1,000 *huns* a year. Higher ranks over *hāzārīs* were *pānjhāzārīs* and the *sarnobat* or supreme commander of the cavalry. In the infantry, nine privates (*pāiks*) formed the lowest unit under a *nāik*. Over five *nāiks* there was one *havaldār*, over two or three *havaldārs* one *jumlādār*, and over ten *jumlādārs* one *hāzārī*. Instead of five *hāzārīs* as in the cavalry, there were seven *hāzārīs* in the infantry under the command of the *sarnobat* of the infantry. Although Shivājī in most cases led the army in person, it was formally under a *senāpati*, or commander-in-chief, who was a member of the council of ministers. Since forts played an important part in the history of the Marāthas, ample precaution was taken to maintain the garrisons there in an efficient condition. Every fort was under three officers of equal status, viz. the *havaldār*, the *sabnis*, and the *sarnobat*, who were to act together and thus to serve

as a check on one another. Further, to prevent treachery on the part of the fort-officers, Shivājī arranged "that in each garrison there should be a mixture of castes".

Though regular and generous in making payments and giving rewards to the soldiers, Shīvājī did not forget to enforce strict discipline on them. He drew up a set of regulations for their conduct so that their morals might not be lowered. The more important of these regulations laid down: "No woman, female slave, or dancing girl, was to be allowed to accompany the army.[1] A soldier keeping any of these was to be beheaded. Cows were exempt from seizure, but bullocks might be taken for transport only. Brāhmaṇas were not to be molested, nor taken as hostages for ransom. No soldier should misconduct himself (during a campaign)." As regards spoils of war, Shivājī ordered that "whenever a place was plundered, the goods of poor people, *pulsiyah* (copper money), and vessels of brass and copper, should belong to the man who found them; but other articles, gold and silver, coined or uncoined, gems, valuable stuffs or jewels, were not to belong to the finder but were to be given up without the smallest deduction to the officers and to be by them paid over to Shivājī's government".

D. An Estimate of Shivājī

Both as a ruler and a man, Shivājī occupies a distinguished place in the history of India. A born leader of men, who could throw a spell over all who came in contact with him, he elevated himself, by dint of his unusual bravery and diplomacy, from the position of a *jāgīrdār* to that of a *Chhatrapati* and became an irresistible enemy of the mighty Mughul Empire, then at the zenith of its power. The most brilliant of his achievements was the welding together of the Marātha race, "scattered like atoms through many Deccani Kingdoms", into a mighty nation in "the teeth of opposition of four great powers like the Mughul empire, Bijāpur, Portuguese India, and the Abyssinians of Janjīra". He left an extensive kingdom at his death. "The territories and the treasures, however, which Shivājī acquired, were not so formidable to the Mughuls," writes Grant Duff, "as the example he had set, the system and habits he had introduced, and the spirit he had infused into a large proportion of the Marātha people." The Marātha nation that he built up defied the Mughul Empire during

[1] We may contrast with this the influence of the harem that accompanied the Mughul army.

and after Aurangzeb's reign, and remained the dominant power in India during the eighteenth century, so that a descendant of Aurangzeb became the virtual puppet of a Marātha chief, Mahādājī Sindhia. The Marātha power also competed with the English for supremacy in India till it was finally crushed in the time of Lord Hastings.

It would be unjust to describe Shivājī as "an entrepreneur of rapine or a Hindu edition of 'Alāuddīn or Tamarlene", as Khāfī Khān and even some modern writers have done. A great constructive genius, he possessed all the essential qualities needed for the national regeneration of a country. "His system was his own creation and, unlike Ranjit Singh, he took no foreign aid in his administration. His army was drilled and commanded by his own people and not by Frenchmen. What he built lasted long; his institutions were looked up to with admiration and emulation, even a century later in the palmy days of the Peshwās' rule." He was not a relentless conqueror indulging in unnecessary cruelty and plunder for the sake of plunder. His chivalrous conduct during his campaigns towards women and children, including those of the Muslims, has been eulogised even by Khāfī Khān, a hostile critic: "Shivājī had always striven to maintain the honour of the people in his territories . . . and was careful to maintain the honour of women and children of Muhammadans when they fell into his hands. His injunctions upon this point were very strict, and anyone who disobeyed them received punishment." Rawlinson rightly observes: "He was never deliberately or wantonly cruel. To respect women, mosques, and non-combatants, to stop promiscuous slaughter after a battle, to release and dismiss with honour captured officers and men—these are, surely, no light virtues." Shivājī's ideal was the restoration of an indigenous Empire in his country, and he pursued it with singleness of purpose. But he had no time to work it out in full.

In his private life, Shivājī remained immune from the prevalent vices of the time, and his moral virtues were exceptionally high. Sincerely religious from his early life, he did not forget the lofty ideals with which he had been inspired by his mother and his *guru* Rāmdās, in the midst of political or military duties. He sought to make religion a vital force in the uplifting of the Marātha nation and always extended his patronage to Hindu religion and learning. "Religion remained with him", remarks a modern Marāthi writer, "an ever-fresh fountain of right conduct and generosity; it did not obsess his mind or harden him into a bigot." Tolerant of other faiths, he deeply venerated Muslim saints and granted rent-free

lands to meet the expenses of illumination of Muslim shrines and mosques, and his conduct towards the Capuchin fathers (Christian monks) of Surāt, during its first sack by him, was respectful. Even his bitterest critic, Khāfī Khān, writes: "But he (Shivājī) made it a rule that whenever his followers went plundering, they should do no harm to the mosques, the Book of God, or the women of any one. Whenever a copy of the sacred Quran came into his hands he treated it with respect and gave it to some of his Mussalmān followers. When the women of any Hindu or Muhammadan were taken prisoners by his men, he watched over them until their relations came with a suitable ransom to buy their liberty."

E. Shambhūjī and his Successors

Shivājī was succeeded by his eldest son, Shambhūjī, who, though pleasure-loving, was brave. His chief adviser was a Brāhmaṇa from Northern India named Kavi-Kulash, whose morals were not above reproach. Under the new king the Marātha power weakened but did not become entirely inert. Shambhūjī himself realised the nature of the Mughul menace, and fought the mighty force which Aurangzeb had brought to the Deccan with courage and resolution till he was surprised and captured (11th February, 1689), at Sangameshwar, twenty-two miles from Ratnagiri, by an energetic Mughul officer named Muqarrab Khān. His minister, Kavi-Kulash, and twenty-five of his chief followers, were also captured with him. The two chief captives were brought to the imperial camp at Bahādurgarh and were publicly paraded. After being tortured in various ways for more than three weeks, the captives were put to death on the 11th March, 1689. The imperialists quickly captured many of the Marātha forts, and even besieged the Marātha capital at Rāigarh. But Rājārām, younger brother of Shambhūjī, slipped out of the city, disguised as a mendicant, and after various adventures reached Jinjī in the Karnātak. The capital city had in the meanwhile capitulated, and Shambhūjī's family, including his infant son, Shāhū, had been captured by the Mughuls. Thus the Marātha power seemed to be completely overthrown.

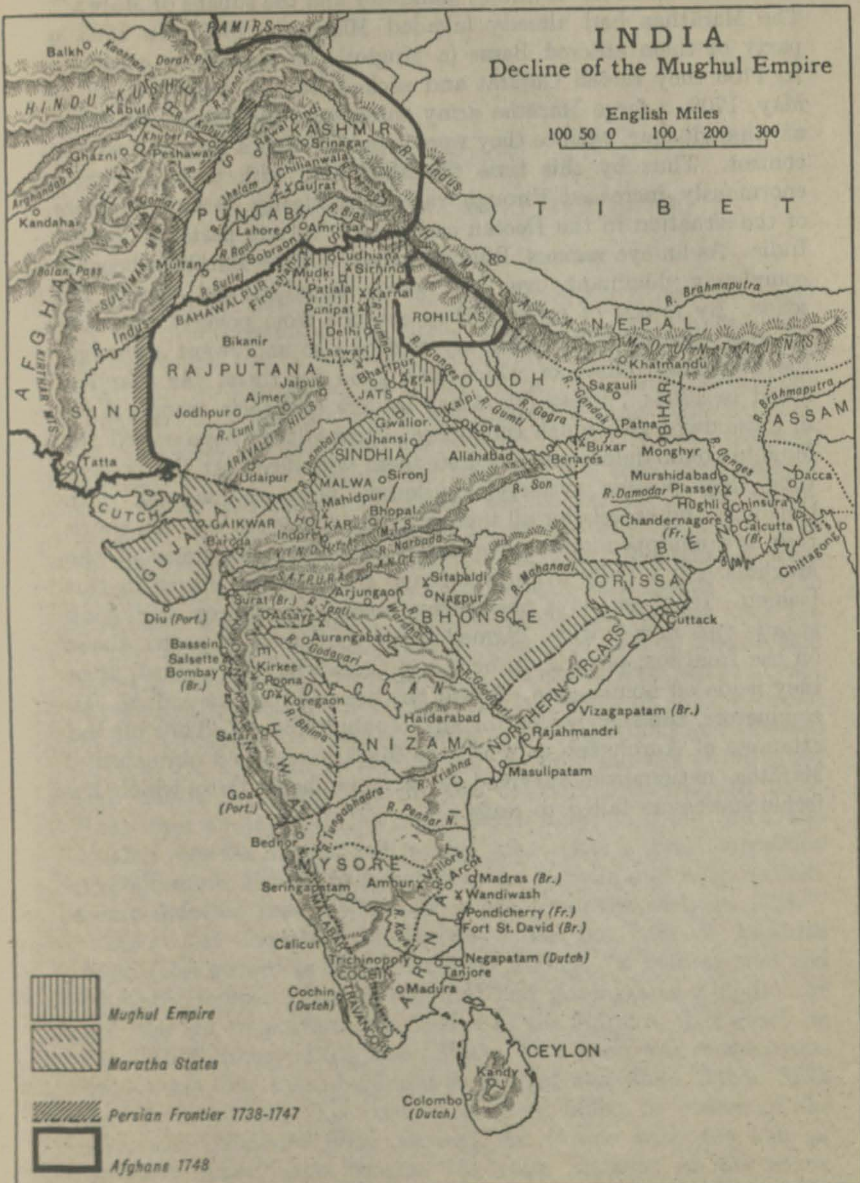
But the spirit with which Shivājī had inspired his people could not die out so easily. The Marāthas recovered quickly and again began a war of national resistance to the Mughuls, which ultimately exhausted the resources of the latter. In Mahārāshtra the Marātha recovery was effected by leaders like Rāmchandra Pant, Shankaraji Malhar, and Parashurām Trimbak. Parashurām became *Pratinidhi*

or regent in 1701. In the eastern Carnatic affairs were ably managed by Pralhād Nirājī, the first *Pratinidhi*. The Marātha captains now fought and raided in different quarters on their own account. Aurangzeb was, in fact, confronted by "a people's war" and he "could not end it, because there was no Marātha government or state-army for him to attack and destroy". Two able and active Marātha generals, Santājī Ghorpade and Dhanājī Jādava, swept on from one area to another, caused great loss and confusion to the Mughuls, and carried their daring raids, according to the Marātha chronicles, even to the Emperor's camp. Many officers of the Mughul Deccan purchased safety by paying *chauth* to the Marāthas, and some of them even joined the enemy in plundering the Emperor's people. As Sir J. N. Sarkar observes, "the Mughul administration had really dissolved, and only the presence of the Emperor with all his troops in the country held it together, but it was now a delusive phantom. Santā and Dhanā were the heroes of this period; the initiative lay entirely with them, and they upset every plan and calculation formed by the imperialists".

Jinjī, having stood a siege of about eight years, was captured by Zu'lfiqār Khān in January, 1698. But Rājārām had escaped to Sātārā, where he gathered a powerful army and resumed the struggle in the northern Deccan, where Aurangzeb had assembled his forces. The imperialists besieged the fort of Sātārā in December, 1699, but the garrison defended it heroically till, after the death of Rājārām on the 12th March, 1700, it was surrendered on certain terms by his minister, Parashurām. The Emperor now seized fort after fort of the Marāthas in person, but what they lost one day was regained by them the next day and the war was protracted interminably.

After the death of Rājārām, his widow, Tārā Bāī, a lady of masterly spirit, guided the destiny of the Marātha nation at this juncture as regent for her minor son, Shivājī III. She was, as even the hostile critic Khāfī Khān admitted, "a clever, intelligent woman, and had obtained reputation during her husband's lifetime for her knowledge of civil and military matters". Having organised the administration of the State and suppressed the quarrels of the rival parties[1] for succession to the throne, she, as Khāfī Khān tells us, "took vigorous measures for ravaging the imperial territory and sent armies to plunder the six subahs

[1] The party of Tārā Bāī and her son; that of Rajas Bāī, another wife of Rājārām and mother of Shambhūjī II; and that which supported the cause of Shāhū, son of Shambhūjī I.



INDIA
Decline of the Mughul Empire
English Miles
100 50 0 100 200 300
TIBET
PAMIRS
Balkh
HINDU KUSH
Kabul
Ghazni
Peshawar
Kandahar
Bolan Pass
KASHMIR
Srinagar
Chilianwala
Gujrat
PUNJAB
Lahore
Amritsar
Sobraon
Multan
Ludhiana
Mudki
Sirhind
Patiala
Karnal
Panipat
Delhi
Laswari
ROHILLAS
BAHAWALPUR
Firozshahr
R. Indus
R. Sutlej
R. Ravi
R. Jhelam
R. Brahmaputra
NEPAL
Khatmandu
AFGHAN EMPIRE
SULAIMAN MTS.
KIRTHAR MTS.
SIND
Tatta
CUTCH
Bikanir
RAJPUTANA
Jaipur
Ajmer
Jodhpur
R. Luni
ARAVALLI HILLS
Udaipur
Bharatpur
Agra
JATS
OUDH
Sagauli
Kalpi
R. Gumti
R. Gogra
R. Gandak
Patna
BIHAR
ASSAM
Gwalior
Kora
Jhansi
SINDHIA
Allahabad
Buxar
Benares
Monghyr
Murshidabad
Plassey
Dacca
R. Damodar
Hughli
Chinsura
Chandernagore (Fr.)
Calcutta (Br.)
Chittagong
BENGAL
R. Son
R. Ganges
MALWA
Sironj
Mahidpur
Bhopal
HOLKAR
Indore
GAIKWAR
Baroda
GUJARAT
VINDHYA RANGE
R. Narbada
SATPURA RANGE
Sitabaldi
Nagpur
R. Mahanadi
ORISSA
Cuttack
Arjungaon
BHONSLE
Surat (Br.)
Assaye
R. Tapti
R. Wardha
Diu (Port.)
Aurangabad
R. Godavari
Bassein
Salsette
Bombay (Br.)
Kirkee
Poona
Koregaon
DECCAN
NORTHERN CIRCARS
Vizagapatam (Br.)
Rajahmandri
Haidarabad
Satara
R. Bhima
NIZAM
R. Krishna
Masulipatam
Goa (Port.)
R. Tungabhadra
R. Pennar
Bednor
MYSORE
Vellore
Arcot
Madras (Br.)
Ambur
Seringapatam
Wandiwash
Pondicherry (Fr.)
Fort St. David (Br.)
CARNATIC
R. Kaveri
Calicut
MALABAR
Trichinopoly
Negapatam (Dutch)
Tanjore
COCHIN
Cochin (Dutch)
Madura
TRAVANCORE
CEYLON
Kandy
Colombo (Dutch)
Mughul Empire
Maratha States
Persian Frontier 1738-1747
Afghans 1748

of the Deccan as far as Sironj, Mandasor and the subahs of Mālwa" The Marāthas had already invaded Mālwa in 1699. In 1703 a party of them entered Berar (a Mughul province for a century). In 1706 they raided Gujarāt and sacked Barodā, and in April or May, 1706, a large Marātha army threatened the Emperor's camp at Ahmadnagar, whence they were repulsed after a long and severe contest. Thus by this time the Marāthas, with their resources enormously increased through raids, practically became masters of the situation in the Deccan and also in certain parts of Central India. As an eye-witness, Bhīmsen, wrote: "The Marāthas became completely dominant over the whole kingdom and closed the roads. By means of robbery they escaped from poverty and rose to great wealth." Their military tactics also underwent a change, the immediate effect of which was good for them. As Manucci noted in 1704: "These (Marātha) leaders and their troops move in these days with much confidence, because they have cowed the Mughul commanders and inspired them with fear. At the present time they possess artillery, musketry, bows and arrows, with elephants and camels for all their baggage and tents. . . . In short, they are equipped and move about just like the armies of the Mughuls. . . . Only a few years ago they did not march in this fashion. In those days their arms were only lances and long swords two inches wide. Armed thus, they used to prowl about on the frontiers, picking up here and there what they could; then they made off home again. But at the present time they move like conquerors, showing no fear of any Mughul troops." Thus all the attempts of Aurangzeb to crush the Marāthas proved quite futile. Marātha nationalism survived as a triumphant force which his feeble successors failed to resist.

CHAPTER V

DISINTEGRATION OF THE MUGHUL EMPIRE

1. The Later Mughul Emperors

THE death of Aurangzeb on the 3rd March, 1707, was the signal for the disintegration of the mighty Mughul Empire. Aurangzeb's apprehension that a civil war would break out among his sons after him, to prevent which, it is said, he left a will directing his three surviving sons, Mu'azzam, Muhammad 'A'zam and Muhammad Kām Bakhsh, to partition the Empire peacefully, was justified. No sooner had he breathed his last than his three sons entered into bitter fratricidal quarrels for the possession of the throne of Delhi. Of the three brothers, Mu'azzam was then governor of Kābul, 'A'zam of Gujarāt, and the youngest, Muhammad Kām Bakhsh, of Bijāpur. Kām Bakhsh, though he assumed "all the attributes of sovereignty", could not leave the Deccan. But the eldest, Mu'azzam, hurried towards Āgra from Kābul; and 'A'zam also marched towards the same city. Mu'azzam proposed to 'A'zam a partition of the Empire on the lines laid down by their deceased father, but the latter did not accept these suggestions and resolved to fight for his right to the throne. Nothing but the sword could now decide the issue, and the two brothers soon resorted to it. They met at Jājau, a few miles from Āgra, in June 1707, and 'A'zam lost the day as well as his life. After a brief expedition to Rājputāna, Mu'azzam marched to the Deccan, and Kām Bakhsh, being defeated near Hyderābād, died of wounds early in 1708.

Mu'azzam ascended the throne under the title of Bahādur Shāh (also known as Shāh 'Ālam I). Though "a man of mild and equitable temper, learned, dignified and generous to a fault", he was too old to prevent the decline of the Empire. His death on the 27th February, 1712, was followed by a fresh war of succession among his four sons, Jahāndār Shāh, 'Azīm-us-Shān, Jahān Shāh and Rafī-us-Shān. The last three were killed in course of the war, and Jahāndār Shāh secured the throne with the help of Zu'lfiqār Khān, who became the chief minister of the State. Jahāndār was completely under the influence of a favourite lady

named Lāl Kumārī. "In the brief reign of Jahāndār", observes Khāfī Khān, "violence had full sway. It was a fine time for minstrels and singers and all the tribes of dancers and actors." He was not, however, destined to enjoy power for a long time, but was deposed and strangled in the fort of Delhi under the order of 'Azīm-us-Shān's son, Farrukhsiyar, who proclaimed himself Emperor in A.D. 1713. The king-maker, Zu'lfiqār Khān, was also executed.

Farrukhsiyar owed his elevation to the throne to the two Sayyid brothers, Husain 'Ālī, deputy governor of Patna, and 'Abdullah, governor of Allahābād, who henceforth began to exercise the real power in the State and placed one prince after another on the throne. 'Abdullah became the *Wazīr* and Husain 'Ālī the commander-in-chief of the army; but as the former was a soldier and had no previous experience of civil administration, the full burden of administration fell on the latter. Farrukhsiyar was "feeble, cowardly and contemptible" and "strong neither for evil nor for good", and his attempt to assert his own power made his reign "throughout an agitated and perplexing one, ending in another Imperial tragedy". Under the influence of some of his anti-Sayyid friends, chiefly Mīr Jumla, he acted ungratefully, from the beginning of his reign, towards his Sayyid ministers. Their resentment was so great that they deposed and blinded the Emperor and executed him in an ignominious manner. The treatment that Farrukhsiyar received from the Sayyids was in no way more harsh than what he had himself meted out to his possible rivals. His worthlessness, intrigues, and ingratitude made his removal almost necessary for his ministers. But for men of position like them "the way of doing what had become almost a necessity was unduly harsh, too utterly regardless of the personal dignity of the fallen monarch. Blinding a deposed king was the fixed usage; for that the Sayyids are not specially to blame. But the severity of the subsequent confinement was excessive, and the taking of the captive's life was an extremity entirely uncalled-for".

The king-makers, 'Abdullah and Husain 'Ālī, now raised to the throne two phantom kings, Rafī-ud-Darajāt and Rafī-ud-daulah, sons of Rafī-us-Shān. But within a few months the Sayyids, who determined to "rule through the Imperial puppets", thought that they had discovered another *roi fainéant* in a youth of eighteen, named Rohsan Akhtar, son of Jahān Shāh (the fourth son of Bahādur Shāh), who ascended the throne as Muhammad Shāh. The new Emperor did not prove to be a docile agent of the Sayyids, as they had expected, and found many supporters among

those who had become enemies of the ministers during the seven years of their power. The ablest of the new allies of the sovereign was the famous Nizām-ul-mulk of the Deccan. Husain 'Ālī was removed by assassination while he was proceeding towards Mālwa to chastise the Nizām. 'Abdullah made an attempt to retain his power by placing on the throne a more convenient puppet, Muhammad Ibrāhīm, another son of Rafī-us-Shān, but he was defeated and imprisoned in 1720 and killed by poison in 1722. The new *wazīr*, Muhammad Amīn Khān, expired in 1721, and the Nizām-ul-mulk was called upon to accept that post in February, 1722. As he was essentially a man of action, the atmosphere of the imperial court did not suit his temperament. He soon left it for the Deccan, where he established a virtually independent kingdom, though the fiction of imperial supremacy was maintained till the last. The fall of the Sayyids, and the departure of the Nizām-ul-mulk for the Deccan, did not, however, serve to increase the power and prestige of Muhammad Shāh. As Ghulām Husain, the author of *Siyar*, writes: "Young and handsome, and fond of all kinds of pleasures, he addicted himself to an inactive life, which entirely enervated the energy of the Emperor". Though destiny granted him a long reign, yet "in utter unconcern he let the affairs drift in their own way, and the consequence was most fatal". Province after province—the Deccan, Oudh and Bengal—slipped out of imperial control; the Marāthas established their power far and wide; the Jāts became independent near Āgra; the Ruhelā Afghāns founded the State of Rohilkhand (Ruhelkhand) in the North Gangetic plain; the Sikhs became active in the Punjab; and the invasion of Nādir Shāh dealt a staggering blow to the Delhi Empire. Thus within about three decades of Aurangzeb's death, the vast Empire of the Mughuls ceased to exist as an all-India political unit and was split up into numerous independent or semi-independent states.

The next Emperor, Ahmad Shāh, son of Muhammad Shāh, was unable to cope successfully with the disintegrating forces that had grown so alarming on all sides. The Empire rapidly shrank in extent, being reduced only to a small district round Delhi. The Emperor was deposed and blinded in 1754 by the *wazīr* Ghāzī-ud-dīn Imād-ul-mulk, a grandson of the deceased Nizām-ul-mulk of the Deccan, who now imitated the Sayyid brothers in playing the king-maker. He placed on the throne 'Azīz-ud-dīn (son of Jahāndār Shāh), who had been so long in confinement, and who now adopted the same title as the great Aurangzeb, and called himself 'Ālamgīr II. But the new ruler

"found himself as much a prisoner upon the throne as he was formerly in his confinement". His attempt to free himself from the control of the all-powerful *wazīr* only resulted in his ruin, as he was put to death by the latter's orders. The malignant hostility of this ambitious and unscrupulous *wazīr* compelled Shāh 'Ālam II, the son and successor of 'Ālamgīr II, to move as a wanderer from place to place. Passing through many vicissitudes of fortune, this unlucky sovereign had to throw himself ultimately on the protection of the English and live as their pensioner till his death in A.D. 1806. Shāh 'Ālam II's son, Akbar II, lived in Delhi with the title of Emperor till 1837. The Imperial dynasty became extinct with Bahādur Shāh II, who was deported to Rangoon by the English on suspicion of assisting the Sepoy mutineers. He died there in A.D. 1862.

2. Changed Character of the Later Mughul Nobility, and Party Factions

The deterioration in the character of the nobility during the eighteenth century had a large share in hastening the decline of the Mughul Empire. The nobles of the time ceased to discharge the useful functions which some of them had done in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To the great misfortune of the country, they became eager only for self-aggrandisement and personal ascendancy, to achieve which they plunged the land into bitter civil wars, disastrous conspiracies, and hopeless confusion and anarchy. "To the thoughtful student of Mughul history," remarks Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "nothing is more striking than the decline of the peerage. The heroes adorn the stage for one generation only and leave no worthy heirs sprung from their loins. 'Abdurrahim and Mahābat, 'Sa'dullah and Mīr Jumla, Ibrāhīm and Islām Khān Rūmī, who had made the history of India in the seventeenth century, were succeeded by no son, certainly by no grandson, even half as capable as themselves." This was partly due to the incapacity and lack of resolution on the part of the later rulers of the country, who had not the ability to select the right type of men for administration but were guided by the selfish advice of interested and depraved flatterers. Thus when the Emperor "was a sluggard or a fool, he ceased to be the master and guide of the nobility. They then naturally turned to win the controlling authority at court or in the provinces".

Broadly speaking, the nobles were ranged in two parties. Those who were children of the soil, or had been long domiciled in the

country, formed the Hindustānī or Indo-Moslem party. To this group belonged the Afghān nobles, the Sayyids of Bārha, and Khān-i-Daurān, whose ancestors came from Badakhshān. These Indian Muslims depended mostly on the help of their Hindu compatriots. The foreign nobles of diverse origin, opposed as a class to the members of the Hindustānī party, were indiscriminately called Mughuls, but they were subdivided into two groups according to the land of their origin. Those who came from Transoxiana and other parts of Central Asia, and were mostly of the Sunnī persuasion, formed the Turānī party. The most prominent members of this group were Muhammad Amīn Khān and his cousin, Chīn Qilīch Khān, better known as the Nizām-ul-mulk. The Irānī party was composed of those who hailed from the Persian territories and were Shiahs. The most important members of the Irānī party were Asad Khān and Zu'lfiqār Khān, the king-maker. These were mere factions and were not like the political parties of modern times. Their members had no common principle of action among themselves except that of self-interest and no firm party allegiance. The nature of the political struggles of the period can be well understood when we note that, during the reigns of Bahādur Shāh and Jahāndār Shāh, the Irānī party was in the ascendant under its leader Zu'lfiqār Khān. But from the beginning of Farrukhsiyar's reign the Hindustānī party maintained its authority in alliance with the Turānī group. Then the Turānīans and the Irānīans combined to oust the Hindustānīs from power.

3. Foreign Invasions

A. Invasion of Nādir Shāh

As a natural sequel to the notorious incapacity of the unworthy descendants of Bābur, Akbar and Aurangzeb, and the selfish activities of the nobility, the Mughul State grew corrupt and inefficient. It lost its prestige not only within India but also outside it. The country, famous for its riches, which excited the cupidity of external invaders from time immemorial, became exposed to the menace of a foreign invasion, as had been the case during the dismemberment of the Turko-Afghān Sultanate. This time the invader came not from Central Asia, but from Persia, which had already snatched away Qandahār from the Mughuls. The weak defence of the north-west frontier (the most vulnerable point in the Empire), since the time of Aurangzeb, offered a splendid opportunity to the Persians, when they had become free from

internal troubles by 1736, to make a daring push into the heart of Hindustān under the bold adventurer Nādir Shāh. The feeble attempts of Nāsir Khān and Zakariyā Khān, governors of Kābul and the Punjab respectively, to guard their provinces were of no avail, as their appeals to the Delhi court for help passed unheeded, owing to the machinations of the leaders of the rival parties who fought for power in the court. Their defenceless condition has been thus described by Ghulām Husain, one of the most important Indian writers of the mid-eighteenth century: "The roads and passes being neglected, everyone passed and repassed, unobserved; no intelligence was forwarded to court of what was happening; and neither Emperor nor Minister ever asked why no intelligence of that kind ever reached their ears."

Nādir Shāh, born of a humble family and originally a robber chief, was, however, schooled by hardships and privations, which gave him considerable valour and ability and a restless energy. He helped in the recovery of Persia from the hands of the Afghāns, who had wrested it from Shāh Husain Safavī in A.D. 1722, and entered the service of its restored ruler, Shāh Tahmāsp, son of the deposed king, Shāh Husain, in A.D. 1727. Through the incompetence of his master, Nādir became the *de facto* ruler of the State and eventually deposed him in 1732. On the death of Shāh Tahmāsp's infant son and successor, Nādir became the ruler of Persia in reality as well as in name.

Nādir commenced his march towards India in A.D. 1738. The alleged violation of promises by Muhammad Shāh, and the ill-treatment of his envoys by the Delhi court, served as the *casus belli* for his invasion. As the Mughuls had sadly neglected the defences of the north-west frontier, Nādir easily captured Ghaznī, Kābul and Lahore in A.D. 1739. The whole province of the Punjab was thrown into great confusion and disorder, while the pleasure-loving Emperor and the carpet-knights of his court, whose conduct during Nādir's invasion "forms a tale of disgraceful inefficiency amounting to imbecility", did nothing to oppose him. They could think of shaking off their lethargy only when the Persian army had arrived within a few miles of Delhi. The imperial troops then marched to check the advance of the Persians and encamped at Karnāl, twenty miles north of Pānīpat; but they were routed in February, A.D. 1739. The vanquished Emperor of Delhi, almost at the mercy of Nādir as his captive, hurried to sue for peace.

The victorious Nādir and the humiliated Emperor of Delhi together entered Delhi, where the former occupied Shāh Jahān's palace-

chambers by the *Diwān-i-Khās*. At first there was no disorder in the imperial city, but a rumour of Nādir's death, spread by some mischievous persons, gave rise to a tumult in which some Persian soldiers were slain. Nādir at first merely took steps to quell the disturbance, but the sight of his murdered soldiers infuriated him and, burning with feelings of revenge, he ordered a general massacre of the citizens of the doomed city of Delhi. A contemporary account tells us that the slaughter lasted from eight in the morning till three in the afternoon. "Within the doomed areas, the houses were looted, all the men killed without regard for age, and all the women dragged into slavery. The destroyers set fire to many houses, and several of their victims, both dead and wounded, Hindus and Muhammadans, were indiscriminately burnt together." The survivors, blockaded within the city, were reduced to extreme misery, for, besides plundering the market-places, Nādir caused the granaries to be sealed up, placed guards over them and sent detachments to plunder the villages. The Persian soldiers deliberately tortured the principal citizens for money, and three crores of rupees were realised by force from the helpless and starving inhabitants of the wretched city, which presented for eight weeks a dreadful scene of arson and carnage. At the earnest appeal of Muhammad Shāh, Nādir at last called off his soldiers, but peace was not restored till the invader left the city for his own country. Muhammad Shāh retained the throne, but he had to sustain irreparable losses. The ruthless conqueror carried away all his crown jewels, including the famous Koh-i-nūr diamond, the costly Peacock Throne of Shāh Jahān, and the celebrated illustrated Persian manuscript on Hindu music written under the command of the Emperor Muhammad Shāh. According to the estimate of Nādir's own secretary, he exacted at Delhi fifteen crores of rupees in cash, and a vast amount in jewels, apparel, furniture and other valuable articles from the imperial store-house. He also took away with him 300 elephants, 10,000 horses, and the same number of camels. Thus the Persian invasion entailed a heavy economic drain on the resources of the decadent Delhi Empire. The trans-Indus provinces (Sind, Kābul and the western parts of the Punjab) had to be surrendered to the Persians. Further, the Mughul Empire lost the little prestige that it had still retained, and its decline now became patent to the world. In short, Nādir's invasion left it "bleeding and prostrate". Internally exhausted, it could get no time for recuperation and revival, as the invasion of 1739 set a precedent for further invasions from outside and Ahmad Shāh Abdālī invaded India as the successor to Nādir's empire.

B. Invasions of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī

After the assassination of Nādir in 1747, one of his officers named Ahmad Shāh, an Afghān chief of the Abdālī clan, rose to power and succeeded in establishing himself as the independent ruler of Afghānistān. He styled himself *Durr-i-Durrān*, "the pearl of the age", and his clan was henceforth known as the Durrānī. Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, while accompanying Nādir to India, had seen with his own eyes "the weakness of the Empire, the imbecility of the Emperor, the inattentiveness of the ministers, the spirit of independence which had crept among the grandees". So after establishing his power at home he led several expeditions into India from A.D. 1748 till A.D. 1767.[1] These were something more than mere predatory raids. They indicated the revival of the Afghāns, outside and within India, making a fresh bid for supremacy on the ruins of the Mughul Empire. As a matter of fact, the Afghān bid for supremacy was an important factor in the history of India during a considerable part of the eighteenth century. Ahmad Shāh Abdālī must have entertained the desire of establishing political authority over at least a part of India, though there were other motives, as Elphinstone points out, which led him to undertake these expeditions. He sought to consolidate his authority at home by increasing his reputation through successful foreign adventures, and he also hoped to utilise the booty derived from his Indian campaigns in defraying the expenses of his army and in showering favours and rewards on the Afghān chiefs.

After having conquered Qandahār, Kābul, and Peshāwār, Ahmad Shāh Abdālī invaded India for the first time, in January 1748, with 12,000 veteran troops. But he was defeated at the battle of Mānpur by Ahmad Shāh, the Mughul heir-apparent, and Mīr Mannu, son of the deceased *wazīr* Qamār-ud-dīn, and was put to flight. Mīr Mannu was appointed governor of the Punjab. But before he could settle down, Ahmad Shāh Abdālī invaded the Punjab for the second time in A.D. 1750 and conquered it after defeating him. Unsupported by the Delhi court, the Punjab governor found all resistance futile and submitted to the invader.

The Abdālī invaded India for the third time in December, 1751, when he again defeated Mīr Mannu, conquered Kāshmīr, and forced the Mughul Emperor, Ahmad Shāh, to cede to him the country as far east as Sirhind. Thus the Mughul Empire was further

[1] Some English records refer to an invasion of the Punjab by Ahmad Shāh Abdālī in A.D. 1769. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, December 1934.

reduced in extent. Mīr Mannu was now left as the Abdālī's governor in Lahore. He promised to send to the victor the surplus revenue of the Punjab and not to transact important matters without final orders from him. But the Abdālī led another expedition in the time of Emperor 'Ālamgīr II (1754–1759). After the death of Mīr Mannu in November, 1753, and that of his infant son and successor in May, 1754, the province of the Punjab fell into disorder and anarchy due largely to the wilfulness and caprice of the regent-mother, Mughlānī Begam. In response to an appeal from her for help, Imād-ul-mulk, the all-powerful *wazīr* at Delhi, marched to the Punjab, which he himself coveted, in 1756, brought it under his authority, and appointed Mīr Mun'im, "the leading nobleman of Lahore", governor of the province. Enraged at this, Ahmad Shāh Abdālī invaded India for the fourth time in November, 1756, with greater determination, and arrived before Delhi on the 23rd January, 1757. The imperial city was "plundered and its unhappy people again subjected to pillage". Imād-ul-mulk surrendered and was pardoned by the invader, who obtained from the Mughul Emperor the formal cession of the Punjab, Kāshmīr, Sind and the Sirhind district. After plundering the Jāt country, south of Delhi, the Abdālī retired from India in April, 1757, with immense booty and many captives, leaving his son, Tīmūr Shāh, as his viceroy at Lahore with Jahān Khān, the able Afghān general, as the latter's *wazīr*.

The administration of Tīmūr Shāh for one year, from May 1757 to April 1758, was a period of utter lawlessness and disorder. The Sikh community, infuriated by the maltreatment of one of its leaders, rose in rebellion on all sides. Ādīna Beg Khān, governor of the Jullundur Doāb, revolting against the Afghāns, called in the Marāthas to help him. A large army of the Marāthas under the command of Raghunāth Rāo invaded the Punjab in April, 1758, occupied Lahore and expelled the Afghāns. They retired from the Punjab leaving Ādīna Beg Khān as their governor there. But the occupation of Lahore by the Marāthas did not last for more than six months. To avenge their expulsion of Tīmūr Shāh, Ahmad Shāh Abdālī invaded India for the fifth time in October, 1759, and finally conquered the Punjab. A more severe collision of the Afghāns with the Marāthas was inevitable, because both had been, more or less, contending for political supremacy in Hindustān. This took place on the field of Pānīpat on the 14th January, A.D. 1761. Ahmad Shāh Abdālī departed from India towards the close of A.D. 1762. He ordered the Indian chiefs to recognise Shāh 'Ālam II as Emperor. Nājib-ud-daulah and

Munīr-ud-daulah agreed to pay to the Abdālī, on behalf of the Indian Government, an annual tribute of forty lacs.

The Sikhs, who had revived by this time, slew Khwāja Abid, the Durrānī governor of Lahore, and occupied the city. This brought back the Abdālī to Lahore in March, 1764. He had, however, to return to his own country, after a fortnight's stay at Lahore, owing to the outbreak of a civil war there and a mutiny among his troops. Ahmad Shāh Abdālī invaded India again in 1767. He could not succeed in effectively thwarting the Sikhs and had to retreat soon "with a consciousness of his ultimate failure", owing to some internal troubles, chiefly the mutiny of his troops clamouring for pay which they had not received regularly. No sooner had he turned back than the Sikhs reoccupied Lahore and the entire open country. Ahmad Shāh Abdālī "retained hold of Peshāwār and the country west of Attock, while he abandoned the Manjha districts and central Punjab including Lahore to the Sikhs; but the Sind-Sāgar and Jech Doāb in the western Punjab remained a debatable land which finally came into their possession in the days of his unworthy successors".

Though Ahmad Shāh Abdālī had to return hurriedly from India, his invasion affected the history of this country in several ways. Firstly, it accelerated the dismemberment of the tottering Mughul Empire. Secondly, it offered a serious check to the rapidly spreading Marātha imperialism. Thirdly, it indirectly helped the rise of the Sikh power. "His career in India," observes a modern writer, "is very intimately a part of the Sikh struggle for independence." Lastly, the menace of Afghān invasion kept the English East India Company in great anxiety, both during the lifetime of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī and for some time after his death.

4. Rise of New Muslim States

On the decline of the central authority at Delhi, the inevitable centrifugal tendency was manifest in different parts of the Empire, and the provincial viceroys made themselves independent of the titular Delhi Emperor for all practical purposes, merely pretending to own a theoretical allegiance to his nominal authority. The most important of them were the subahdārs of the Deccan, Oudh and Bengal.

A. The Deccan

The Deccan *subah* became independent under Mīr Qamār-ud-dīn Chīn Qilīch Khān, better known as the Nizām-ul-mulk. His

grandfather, Khwāja Abid Shaikh-ul-Islām of Bukhārā, migrated to India about the middle of the seventeenth century and entered the service of Aurangzeb. Ghāzī-ud-dīn Fīrūz Jang, father of the Nizām, also came to India during the reign of Aurangzeb and rose to fame by holding several posts in the Mughul imperial service. Mīr Qamār-ud-dīn himself was appointed to a small command in his thirteenth year but he was promoted quickly and given the title of Chīn Qilīch Khān. At the time of Aurangzeb's death, Chīn Qilīch Khān was at Bijāpur, and observed perfect neutrality during the war of succession among the sons of the Emperor. Bahādur Shāh removed him from the Deccan and made him governor of Oudh. He retired from public service for some time but entered it again towards the close of Bahādur Shāh's reign with the title of his father, Ghāzī-ud-din Fīrūz Jang. Farrukhsiyar appointed him governor of the Deccan (1713) and invested him with the titles of Khān Khānān and Nizām-ul-mulk Bahādur Fath Jang, as a reward for his having espoused his cause. From the very outset of his viceroyalty the Nīzām-ul-mulk tried to check the growing strength of the Marāthas in the Deccan. But owing to party cliques at the Delhi court, he had to lose his viceroyalty of the Deccan by the end of 1713, and it was then conferred on Sayyid Husain 'Ālī. The Nizām-ul-mulk was transferred to Murādābād and subsequently his removal to Bihār was also thought of. But before he took charge of the new province, Farrukhsiyar's regime came to a close, and he was transferred to the government of Mālwa. It was in Mālwa that the Nizām-ul-mulk was able to lay the foundation of his future greatness. His activities there roused the suspicions of the Sayyids, who, in disregard of a previous promise, again issued orders for his transfer. But instead of submitting to these orders, he prepared to defend his position by arms. He defeated and slew Dilwār 'Ālī Khān and 'Alim 'Ālī Khān; and Husain 'Ālī, while getting ready to march against him, was stabbed to death. After the fall of the Sayyids, he again made himself master of the Deccan towards the end of 1720. On the death of his cousin, the *wazīr* Amīn Khān, in 1721, the Nizām-ul-mulk was summoned to Delhi and was appointed to the office of *wazīr* in February, 1722. But he did not find himself happy in the vitiated atmosphere of the Delhi court, where the frivolous courtiers of Muhammad Shāh rejected his advice and poisoned the Emperor's mind against him. So he left for the Deccan without the Emperor's permission in the third week of December, A.D. 1723. His enemies led their credulous ruler to believe that he was in rebellion and induced the Emperor to send secret instructions to Mubāriz Khān,

governor of Hyderābād, to fight against him, promising him the viceroyalty of the Deccan in the event of his success. But the Nizām-ul-mulk not only defeated and slew Mubāriz Khān at Sakhar Kheda in Berar on the 11th October, 1724, but also indirectly compelled the wretched Emperor of Delhi to recognise him as the viceroy of the south and confer on him the title of Āsaf Jāh, which his descendant still bears. "From this time may be dated the Nizām-ul-mulk's virtual independence and the foundation of the present Hyderābād State." The Nizām-ul-mulk's efficient administration of the Deccan has been highly praised by Khāfī Khān. Ghulām Husain also observes: "It is an extensive tract (the Deccan *subah*) that he governed with an absolute authority for the space of seven and thirty years." He died at the grand old age of ninety-one on the 21st May, 1748, when the quarrels for succession to the Deccan government gave opportunities to the European trading companies to interfere vigorously in the politics of the *subah*.

B. Oudh

The *subah* of Oudh then comprised not only modern Oudh but also Benares to the east of it, a part of the territory to its west and some districts near Allahābād and Cawnpore. The founder of the kingdom of Oudh was Sa'ādat Khān, an immigrant from Khurāsān. Appointed governor of Oudh in 1724, he rapidly rose to power and fame, and was summoned to Delhi at the time of Nādir's invasion; but he committed suicide the same year. The next governor of Oudh was Sa'ādat Khān's nephew and son-in-law, Safdar Jang. Appointed *wazīr* of the Delhi empire in 1748, Safdar Jang played an important part in the contemporary history of India till some time before his death in 1754, in spite of the opposition of Āsaf Jāh Nizām-ul-mulk's son and grandson. He was succeeded in the government of Oudh by his son, Shujā-ud-daulah, who also became the *wazīr* of the empire and was one of the principal figures in the history of Northern India till he died in A.D. 1775.

C. The Bengal Subah

Murshid Qulī Jāfar Khān, appointed governor of Bengal by Aurangzeb in 1705, proved to be a strong and able ruler, though he occasionally adopted severe measures to collect revenues from the local zamindārs. He transferred the capital of Bengal from Dacca to Murshidābād. Fully alive to the economic interests of

his province, he made attempts to prevent the abuse of *dastaks* by the servants of the English East India Company and wanted to collect from them the same amount of duties on trade as the Indian merchants had to pay. After his death in A.D. 1727, his son-in-law, Shujā-ud-dīn Khān, succeeded him in the government of Bengal. It was during the regime of Shujā-ud-dīn that the Bihār *subah*, the eastern limit of which extended up to Teliāgarhī (near Sāhebganj on the E.I. Ry. Loop Line), was annexed to Bengal about A.D. 1733 and 'Ālīvardī was sent as its *nāib nāzim*. Shujā-ud-dīn died in 1739, after which his son, Sarfarāz Khān, became the Nawāb of Bengal. But the new Nawāb's regime was not destined to last long. 'Ālīvardī, his brother Hājī Ahmad, the *rāyrāyān* 'Ālamchānd and Jagat Seth Fateh Chānd, organised a conspiracy against him. 'Ālīvardī marched from Bihār, defeated and slew Sarfarāz at Giriā, near Rājmahal, on the 10th April, A.D. 1740, and occupied the *masnad* of Bengal. He secured imperial confirmation of his new authority through questionable means, and began to govern the province in an independent manner. Trained in the school of adversity, 'Ālīvardī had developed some good qualities, which helped him to become an able administrator. Ghulām Husain observes: "A prudent, keen and a valorous soldier, there are hardly any qualifications which he did not possess." His attitude towards the European traders was strict but impartial, and he exacted occasional contributions from them only under the pressure of extraordinary circumstances. But destiny allowed him no rest to enjoy peacefully the *masnad* that he had seized by force. The Marātha invasions of Bengal from year to year during the greater part of his regime were a source of keen anxiety, and the rebellions of his Afghān generals, in alliance with their compatriots of Dārbhangā in Bihār, proved to be a serious menace to his authority. Unable to repel the Marāthas, even by assassinating one of their generals, Bhāskhar Pandit, at Mankarāh near Cāssimbāzār, 'Ālīvardī concluded a treaty with them in May or June, A.D. 1751, whereby he agreed to pay them an annual tribute of twelve lacs of rupees as *chauth* and also ceded to them the revenues of a part of Orissa. This opened the way for ultimate Marātha supremacy over Orissa, which could not be done away with by the English till about A.D. 1803. 'Ālīvardī died in April, A.D. 1756, when the *masnad* of Bengal passed to his heir-designate and favourite grandson, Mīrzā Muhammad, better known as Nawāb Sirāj-ud-daulah, whose brief regime of about one year and two months forms a turning-point in the history of Bengal and also of India.

5. Political Revival of the Hindus

One prominent factor in the history of India during the eighteenth century was the revival of the Hindus. It was not, however, characterised by any spirit of an all-India national, religious or cultural renaissance, but by isolated attempts on the part of the different Hindu or semi-Hindu powers, such as the Rājputs, the Sikhs, the Jāts and the Marāthas, to establish their respective political supremacy on the ruins of the Mughul Empire.

A. The Rājputs

The principal Rājput states like Mewār (Udaipur), Mārwār (Jodhpur) and Amber (Jaipur), whose sympathy for the Empire had been alienated by Aurangzeb, tried to throw off their allegiance to it after the death of that Emperor. They were first brought to submission by Bahādur Shāh. But very soon, Ajit Singh of Jodhpur, Jay Singh II of Amber and Durgādās Rāthor departed from the Emperor's camp on the 30th April, 1708, and formed a league against him. In view of the Sikh rising in the north of Sirhind, Bahādur Shāh pacified the Rājputs by conciliatory measures. But during the disorder that followed his death, Ajit Singh invaded the imperial territories. Sayyid Husain 'Ālī was sent to subdue the Mārwār chief, but the court-politics of the time had become so vitiated that the Emperor and the anti-Sayyid clique secretly urged the Rājput ruler "to make away with Husain 'Ālī in any way he could, whereupon the whole of the Bakhshi's property and treasure would become his; and he would, in addition, receive other rewards". Ajit Singh, however, could not carry out these instructions. He came to terms with Husain 'Ālī without a single battle, and in 1714 concluded peace with the Emperor by agreeing to give him one of his daughters in marriage. The marriage was celebrated the next year.

Henceforth, the chiefs of Jodhpur and Jaipur played important parts in Delhi politics and "by opportune aloofness or adherence they had added to their possessions a large portion of the Empire". The Sayyids tried to attach them to their party and they were rewarded with some appointments besides holding their own dominions in full sovereignty. Ajit Singh remained governor of Ajmer and Gujarāt till 1721. During the reign of Muhammad Shāh, Jay Singh II of Jaipur was appointed governor of Surāt, and after the fall of the Sayyids, he received also the government of Āgra. "In this way the country from a point sixty miles south

of Delhi to the shores of the ocean at Surāt was in the hands of these two Rājās, very untrustworthy sentinels for the Mughuls on this exposed frontier." Ajit Singh secretly assisted the Marāthas in their activities in Western India, and was removed from the government of Gujarāt. He met with a tragic and mysterious death at the hands of his son, Bhakt Singh. The revival of the Rājputs was only temporary. Woeful days of internal disorder and foreign exploitation were in store for their land.

B. The Sikhs

Guru Govind was stabbed by an Afghān in 1708. After his assassination the Sikhs found a leader in Bāndā. Proceeding to the north, Bāndā organised a large number of Sikhs and captured Sirhind after killing its *faujdār*, Wazīr Khān, the murderer of Guru Govind's children. The country between the Sutlej and the Jnmnā next fell under his control. He established the stronghold of Lohgarh (or Blood and Iron Fort) at Mukhlīspur, half-way between Nahan and Sadhaurā, where he "tried to assume something of regal state" and struck coins in his own name. The Emperor marched against him and besieged the fort of Lohgarh, whereupon he fled away with many of his followers into the hills north of Lahore. However, after the death of Bahādur Shāh, Bāndā came out of hiding, occupied the town of Sadhaurā, recovered the fort of Lohgarh and again plundered the province of Sirhind. But in 1715 he was besieged in the fortress of Gurudāspur. The Sikhs fought desperately "contending among themselves for martyrdom, and many of them were captured after a fierce resistance". Bāndā and his followers were sent to Delhi and were relentlessly treated. "A reward was given for every Sikh head." Taunted by a noble, Bāndā replied that he had been "a mere scourge in the hands of God for the chastisement of the wicked and that he was now receiving the meed of his own crimes against the Almighty". His own son was killed before his eyes; and he himself "was tormented to death under the feet of elephants". Thus "the fortunes of the Sikh nation sank to the lowest ebb in 1716".

But the military power of the Sikhs could not be completely destroyed. The tenets of Nānak and Govind had "taken deep root in the hearts of the people; the peasant and the mechanic nursed their faith in secret, and the more ardent clung to the hope of ample revenge and speedy victory". The Sikhs began to organise themselves gradually, and Kapur Singh, a resident of

Fyzullāpur, started an organisation which developed later into the celebrated *Dal Khālsā* or the theocracy of the Sikhs. The disorders and confusion in the Punjab, following the invasion of Nādir Shāh, were utilised by the Sikhs to augment their financial resources and increase their military strength. "The suppression of the Sikhs, difficult under all circumstances, became even more difficult now." They built a fort at Dalewāl on the Rāvī, and plundering the country around, carried their depredations to the vicinity of Lahore. The invasions of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī also helped the rise of the Sikh power to a great extent. Though they met with some reverses after 1752, they ultimately gained complete victory. Especially after the third battle of Pānīpat, they took advantage of the disturbed political condition of the country to organise and strengthen themselves sufficiently, and greatly harassed the Abdālī on his return march. They opposed the Abdālī in his subsequent invasions, and after his invasion in 1767 reoccupied the entire open country.

C. The Jāts

Towards the close of the reign of Aurangzeb, predatory bands of the Jāts under individual village headmen like Rājārām, Bhajja and Churāman carried out depredations round Delhi and Āgra and increased their power. But whatever they could achieve was lost when in 1721 Sawai Jay Singh II captured Churāman's stronghold of Thun and the latter committed suicide. "Up to the middle of the eighteenth century," writes Sir J. N. Sarkar, "there was as yet no Jāt State, no politically united Jāt nation, no Jāt king standing clearly above the other village headmen or even recognised as first among equals; but only a robber leader whose success had drawn to his banners many of his peers in social status as partners in his adventures and plunder." But the scattered units of the Jāts were subjected to the "grasp of a superior controlling force" by Badan Singh, the son of Churāman's brother, Bhāo Singh. In the face of great difficulties, Badan Singh established the authority of his house over almost the whole of the Āgra and Muttrā districts by "matchless cunning, tireless patience, and wise versatility in the choice of means", and also by marriage alliances with some powerful Jāt families. Badan Singh died on the 7th June, 1756. His adopted son and successor, Sūraj Mal, who has been described by a contemporary historian as "the Plato of the Jāt tribe" and by a modern writer as the "Jāt Ulysses", because of his "political sagacity, steady intellect and clear vision", extended the authority

of the Bharatpur kingdom over the districts of Āgra, Dholpur, Mainpurī, Hāthrās, 'Ālīgarh, Etāwah, Meerut, Rohtak, Farrukhnagar, Mewāt, Rewārī, Gurgāon and Muttrā. Sūrajmal, the greatest warrior and the ablest statesman that the Jāts have produced, died on the 25th December, 1763. "The reputation of the Jāt race reached its highest point under him and after him it was sure to decline."

D. The Marāthas

The Marāthas were the most formidable of the Hindu powers who made a bid for supremacy on the dismemberment of the Mughul Empire. They could not, indeed, form any strong determination of founding an empire immediately after the death of Aurangzeb, but were absorbed for a few years in internal quarrels. 'A'zam Shāh released Shivājī II, better known as Shāhū, in 1707 at the suggestion of Zu'lfiqār Khān. Zu'lfiqār Khān pointed out that Shāhū's return to his kingdom would inevitably cause a division among the Marāthas, who would thus be disabled from plundering the imperial territories when the main army was absent from the Deccan. It happened as he had expected. The claims of Shāhū were strongly opposed by Tārā Bāī, and a protracted civil war consequently ensued. Shāhū ultimately came out victorious, mainly with the help and advice of a Chitpāvan Brāhmaṇa from the Konkān, named Bālājī Viswanāth.

Born of a poor family, Bālājī Viswanāth was appointed in 1708 a *carcoon* or revenue clerk by Dhanājī Jādav, the *senāpati* or commander-in-chief of Shāhū. After Dhanājī's death, he was associated with the former's son, Chandra Sena Jādav, and received from him the title of *Senā Karte*, organiser or "agent in charge of the army", in 1712. Thus he got opportunities to display his ability both as a civil administrator and a military organiser, before Shāhū, in recognition of the valuable services rendered by him, appointed him *Peshwā* or prime minister on the 16th November, 1713. In theory, the office of the *Pratinidhi* was higher than that of the Peshwā, but by virtue of superior talents and abilities, Bālājī Viswanāth and his illustrious son and successor, Bāji Rāo I, made the Peshwā the real head of the Marātha Empire, the *Chhatrapati* or the king being, in the course of a few years, relegated to the background.

The Marāthas did not fail to utilise the distractions of the tottering Empire to their advantage. Bālājī Viswanāth obtained important concessions in reality from Husain 'Ālī when the latter came to the Deccan and in form only from the puppet Emperor of

Delhi. To win over the Marāthas to his party, Husain 'Ālī concluded a treaty with them in 1714 on the following terms: (i) Shāhū was to get back all the territories that had once belonged to Shivājī but had been conquered by the Mughuls, and to these were to be added the provinces of Khāndesh, Gondwāna, Berar, and the districts in Hyderābād and the Karnātak, conquered by the Marāthas, (ii) the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhī* of the six *subahs* of the Deccan were assigned to Shāhū, who was required, in return, to maintain 15,000 horse for imperial service, to pay an annual tribute of ten lacs of rupees, and to preserve peace and order in the Deccan. The acknowledgment of the overlordship of the Emperor of Delhi by Shāhū meant a complete departure from the ideal of absolute independence cherished by Shivājī, and the concessions secured by the Marāthas did not in any way affect the suzerainty of Delhi. But it should be noted that these were of much practical value. The treaty of 1714 has been rightly regarded as "a landmark in Marātha history", as by it the Marāthas were recognised "as co-partners in the revenues of the Imperial provinces, and, as a corollary, in political power there".

To destroy the ascendancy of the anti-Sayyid party at the Delhi court, Sayyid Husain 'Ālī marched to Delhi with his new allies, and after deposing Farrukhsiyar placed another puppet on the throne, who was constrained to confirm the treaty already concluded between Husain 'Ālī and the Marāthas. The march of the Marāthas to Delhi in 1719 was a significant event in their history. "The prestige of their presence at the imperial capital, not as mercenaries, but as the allies and supporters of the king-makers, held out to them a promise that they might some day make and unmake Emperors. Indeed, it was the surest basis on which Bālājī Viswanāth could confidently build his policy of founding a Marātha Empire." The power of the Marāthas also increased in other ways. Through the revival of the *jāgīr* system in the troubled days of Rājārām, the Marātha adventurers had splendid opportunities to carve out independent principalities for themselves. In addition to this, the Marāthas secured the right of collecting *chauth* and *sardeshmukhī*, for which distinct areas were distributed by Bālājī Viswanāth among the chief Marātha officers, who also took part in the wars of contending Muslim nobles as paid partisans.

After Bālājī Viswanāth's death in 1720, his son, Bājī Rāo I, a promising young man, was invested with the office of the Peshwā. The Peshwāship came to be hereditary in the family of Bālājī Viswanāth.

Bājī Rāo I was not merely an able soldier but also a wise statesman. He at once perceived that the Mughul Empire was nearing its end and that the situation could be well utilised to enhance the power of the Marāthas by securing the sympathy of the Hindu chiefs. Bold and imaginative, he definitely formulated the policy of Marātha imperialism, initiated by the first Peshwā, by launching a policy of expansion beyond the Narmadā with a view to striking at the centre of the imperial power. So he suggested to his master Shāhū: "Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree. The branches will fall of themselves. Thus should the Marātha flag fly from the Kṛishṇā to the Indus." This policy of Bājī Rāo was not supported by many of his colleagues, who urged on him the advisability of consolidating the Marātha power in the south before undertaking northern conquests. But by eloquence and enthusiasm, he persuaded his master to sanction his plan of northern expansion.

To evoke the sympathy and secure the support of the Hindu chiefs, Bājī Rāo I preached the ideal of *Hindu-Pād-Pādshāhī* or a Hindu Empire. When he invaded Mālwa in December, 1723, the local Hindu zamindārs assisted him greatly although they had to make thereby enormous sacrifices in life and money. Taking advantage of a civil war in Gujarāt, the Marāthas established their hold in that rich province. But the intervention of Bājī Rāo I in its affairs was strongly resented by a rival Marātha party under the leadership of the hereditary *senāpati* or commander-in-chief Trimbak Rāo Dhābāde. Rājā Shambhūjī II of the Kolhāpur branch of Shivājī's family and the Nizām-ul-mulk, jealous of Bāji Rāo I's successes, joined Trimbak Rāo Dhābāde. But Bājī Rāo I, by force of his superior genius, frustrated the plans of his enemies. Trimbak Rāo Dhābāde was defeated and slain in a battle, fought on the 1st April, 1731, on the plains of Bilhāpur near Dhāboī between Barodā and that town. This victory of Bājī Rāo I "forms a landmark in the history of the Peshwās". It left him without any serious rival at home and "with all but nominal control of the Marātha sovereignty". With the Nizām-ul-mulk also he arrived at a compromise in August, 1731, by which the former "was to be at liberty to gratify his ambitions in the south, the Peshwā in the north".

Bājī Rāo I fortunately secured the friendship of Jay Singh II Sawai of Amber and Chhatrasāl Bundelā. In 1737 he marched on to the vicinity of Delhi but did not enter it in order to avoid hurting the Emperor's sentiments. To get rid of this Marātha menace, the Emperor summoned the Nizām-ul-mulk, the arch-enemy of Bājī Rāo I, to Delhi for help. The Nizām-ul-mulk had no scruple in

ignoring the compromise of 1731 and at once responded to the Emperor's call, which he considered to give a favourable opportunity of checking the rising power of Bājī Rāo I. The two rivals met near Bhopāl. The Nizām-ul-mulk was defeated and compelled to submit to terms by which he promised "to grant to Bājī Rāo the whole of Mālwa, and the complete sovereignty of the territory between the Narmadā and the Chambal; to obtain a confirmation of this cession from the Emperor; and to use every endeavour to procure the payment of fifty lakhs of rupees, to defray the Peshwā's expenses". These arrangements being sanctioned by the Emperor, Marātha supremacy, already established *de facto* in a part of Hindustān proper, became also *de jure*. On the west coast, the Marāthas captured Salsette and Bassein from the Portuguese in 1739. But soon Bājī Rāo I was somewhat perturbed by the news of Nādir Shāh's invasion. By sinking all his differences with his Muslim neighbours, the Peshwā made an attempt to present a united opposition to the Persian invader, but before anything could be done, he died a premature death in April, 1740, at the age of forty-two. Thus passed away one of the greatest Marātha statesmen, who, in spite of some blots in his private character, tried his utmost to serve the cause of the Marātha State. He may very well be regarded as the second founder of the Marātha Empire.

Though Bājī Rāo I enhanced the power and prestige of the Marāthas to a considerable degree, the State which he ruled in his master's name lacked compactness. Through the revival of the *jāgīr* system in Rājārām's time, some semi-independent Marātha principalities grew up within it. The natural consequence of this was the weakening of the Marātha central government and "its ultimate collapse". One of the earliest and most important of such principalities was Berar, then under Raghūjī Bhonsle, related to Shāhū by marriage. His family was older than that of the Peshwā, as it had become prominent during Rājārām's reign. The Dhābādes originally held Gujarāt, but after the fall of the hereditary *senāpati*, his former subordinates, the Gāikwārs, established their authority at Barodā. Ranojī Sindhia, founder of the Sindhia house of Gwālior, served creditably under Bājī Rāo I, and, after the annexation of Mālwa to the Marātha State, a part of the province fell to his share. Malhār Rāo Holkar of the Indore family also served with distinction under Bājī Rāo I and obtained a part of Mālwa. A small fief in Mālwa was granted to the Pawars, who made Dhār their headquarters.

Bājī Rāo I was succeeded as Peshwā by his eldest son, Bālājī II, commonly known as Nānā Sāheb and Balājī Bājī Rāo, in spite of

the opposition of some Marātha chiefs. Bālājī was a youth of eighteen at the time, fond of ease and pleasure, and did not possess the superior talents of his father. But he was not devoid of ability, and, "after the manner of his father, engaged vigorously in the prosecution of hostilities, the organisation and equipment of a large army, and the preparation of all the munitions of war". He secured the services of some able and experienced officers of his father. Shāhū, on the eve of his death in 1749, left a deed giving the Peshwā supreme power in the State, with certain reservations. The Peshwā was to perpetuate the name of the Rājā and to preserve the dignity of the house of Shivājī through the grandson of Tārā Bāī and his descendants. He was also required to regard the Kolhāpur State as independent and recognise the existing rights of the *jāgīrdārs*, with whom he could enter into such arrangements "as might be beneficial for extending Hindu power; for protecting the temples of the gods; the cultivators of the soil, and whatever was sacred or useful". This arrangement was challenged by Tārā Bāī, who, acting in concert with Dāmājī Gāikwār, rose in arms against the Peshwā and threw the young Rājā into confinement. The Peshwā, however, defeated his opponents. The Rājā remained a virtual prisoner in the hands of his "Mayor of the Palace", the Peshwā, who became henceforth the real head of the Marātha confederacy.

Bālājī Bājī Rāo was determined to further the cause of Marātha imperialism; but he unwisely departed from the policy of his father in two respects. Firstly, the army underwent a revolutionary change in his time. The light infantry formed the chief source of strength in the days of Shivājī. Though Bājī Rāo I engaged a large number of cavalry, he did not give up the old tactics of fighting. But Bālājī admitted into the army many non-Marātha mercenaries of all descriptions with a view to introducing Western modes of warfare. The army thus lost its national character, and it did not become easy to maintain a number of alien elements under proper discipline and control. The old method of fighting was also partly abandoned. Secondly, Bālājī deliberately gave up his father's ideal of *Hindu-Pād-Pādshāhī*, which aimed at uniting all the Hindu chiefs under one flag. His followers resorted to the old plan of predatory warfare, and the ravages that they committed indiscriminately against the Muslims as well as the Hindus alienated the sympathies of the Rājputs and other Hindu chiefs. Thus Marātha imperialism ceased to stand for an India-wide nationalism, and it became no longer possible for it to organise the Hindu powers under one banner against the Muslim powers, internal or external.

These defects in Bālājī's policy did not, however, immediately check the expansion of the Marātha power both in the south and in the north. A large number of Marāthas appeared before Seringapatam in March, 1757, and forcibly levied tribute from most of the principalities south of the Kṛishṇā. The Nawāb of Arcot promised to pay "two lakhs in ready money, and two and a half lakhs in assignments" for the arrears of *chauth*. The Marāthas also invaded Bednore and the Hindu kingdom of Mysore and assisted the English under Clive and Watson in suppressing the sea-captain Angria. No doubt their progress was somewhat checked by Hyder, the rising general of Mysore, by Bussy the clever Frenchman, and by Nizām 'Ālī of Hyderābād. But the Peshwā's cousin, Sadāsiv Rāo, inflicted a defeat on Nizām 'Ālī at Udgīr in 1760. Ibrāhīm Khān Gardī, a brave Muslim artilleryman trained in Western methods of fighting under Bussy in the Nizām's army, joined the Marāthas. A treaty was concluded by the latter with Nizām 'Ālī by which they got the whole province of Bijāpur, nearly the whole of Aurangābād and a portion of Bīdar, together with some forts including the famous fortress of Daulatābād. These were valuable gains of the Marāthas at the cost of Mughul possessions in the Deccan, which thus came to be "confined to an insulated space".

More striking and significant was the expansion of the Marāthas in the north. At the end of the year 1756 Malhār Rāo Holkar, and, some weeks later, Raghunāth Rāo, were again sent to the north. Though Raghunāth Rāo was detained for about four months in Rājputāna, a force of 20,000 men sent by him under Sakhārām Bāpu cleverly secured the friendship of the Jāts and once more asserted Marātha supremacy in the Doāb. The Marāthas then entered into an alliance with the Delhi court against Nājib-ud-daulah, who had been left by the Abdālī as his "supreme agent" at Delhi and dictator over the Emperor. They attacked Delhi in August, A.D. 1757, and compelled Nājib-ud-daulah to surrender and make peace in September on terms dictated by them. Placing Delhi in the friendly hands of the *wazīr* Imād, Raghunāth Rāo and Malhār Rāo directed their efforts towards conquering the Punjab from the Abdālī's son, Tīmūr Shāh. They captured Sirhind in March and Lahore in April, 1758, and retired from the Punjab after appointing there the experienced local noble, Ādīna Beg Khān, as their viceroy, who promised to pay an annual tribute of seventy-five lakhs of rupees. They left, however, no adequate force for the defence of the newly acquired province. Thus Raghunāth Rāo's policy seemed to have "carried the Hindu paramountcy up to Attock". But "on a calm examination", remarks Sir J. N.

Sarkar, "Raghunāth's vaunted achievement is found to be politically a hollow show and financially barren". It secured not a pice for the Poona treasury but "saddled it with a debt of eighty lakhs to bankers, besides the arrears due to troops". Politically, it made another war with the Abdālī inevitable.

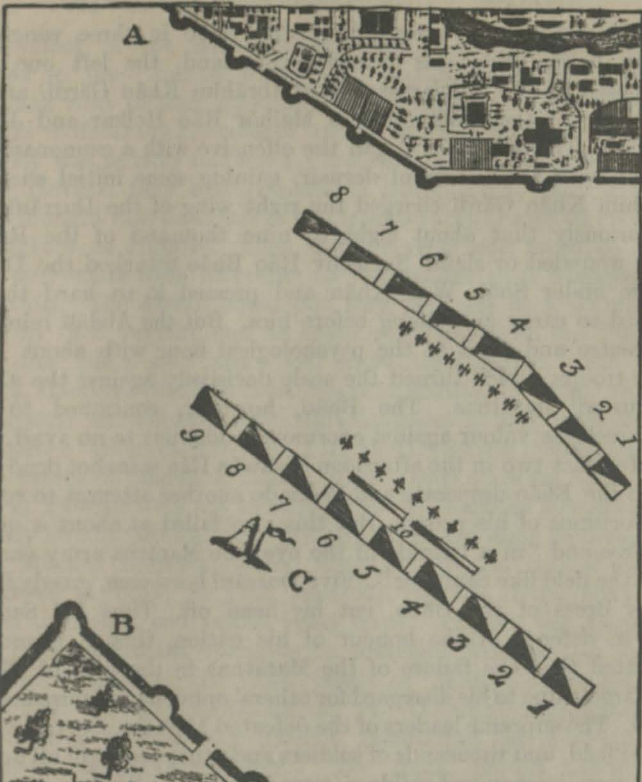
The Marātha domination over the Punjab could give no peace to the province. Ādīna Beg died on the 13th October, 1758, and the whole of the Punjab fell into anarchy and confusion affecting Marātha interests. To remove this, the Peshwā sent a strong force to that province under Dattājī Sindhia in 1759, and the latter placed Sābājī Sindhia as governor there. But the province was soon invaded by a strong Durrānī army, and by the end of November, 1759, the Punjab was finally lost to the Delhi Empire. Ahmad Shāh Abdālī then marched towards Delhi. He had this time the advantage of securing the co-operation of the Ruhelas, who had been harassed by the Marāthas, and that of the Nawāb of Oudh, who believed that the Marāthas were then the greatest enemies of the Muslim position in India. The Marāthas, on the other hand, could not act in combination with the Rājputs, who were alienated by the unsympathetic policy of Bālājī Bājī Rāo, and preferred to remain neutral; nor could they secure the alliance of the Sikhs, who had been rising in the Punjab. In fact, the short-sighted policy of Bālājī now reacted in depriving the Marāthas of the support of many of the principal indigenous powers at a very critical moment, when they were faced with a formidable opposition from the Durrānīs and their Indian allies.

The Abdālī defeated Dattājī Sindhia at Thānesar towards the end of December, 1759, and compelled him to fall back towards Delhi. The Marātha general was killed by the Afghāns at Barārī Ghāt, about ten miles north of Delhi, on the 9th January, 1760. "From the fatal field of Barārī Ghāt the Marātha army fled headlong towards the south-west, with the fresh Durrānī horsemen on their heels." The attempts of Jānkojī Sindhia and Malhār Rāo Holkar to oppose the march of the Abdālī also failed. Sadāshiv Rāo Bhāo, whose recent victory over the Nizām at Udgīr had immensely enhanced his reputation, was sent by the Peshwā with a large army to recover the lost predominance of the Marāthas in the north. By way of a brake on him, the Peshwā's son, Vishwās, a lad of seventeen, was sent as the nominal commander of this army. At the beginning the Bhāo's head was not "turned by insolence and pride"; rather he intended to increase his resources and strength by addition of arms and munitions and by securing the support of some North-Indian allies. He captured Delhi on

the 3rd August, 1760, but, unluckily for the Marāthas, Sūrajmal, "the shrewdest Hindu potentate then alive", abandoned their side owing to some differences of opinion with the Bhāo, who also antagonised Malhār Rāo Holkar. Further, "the coveted capital of India proved a Dead Sea apple" to the Bhāo, who got no adequate resources therefrom but whose difficulties were much aggravated by its occupation. About the middle of August he moved north from Delhi, and reached Pānīpat on the 29th October, 1760.

In the meanwhile, the Abdālī had captured 'Ālīgarh, compelled the Jāt Rājā to promise tribute, and had been able, through the support of his most helpful and constant Indian ally, Nājib-ud-daulah, to secure the alliance of Shujā-ud-daulah of Oudh, whose interests had been affected by Marātha ambition in the north and north-east. After undergoing some hardships and losses in the Doāb, the Abdālī arrived near Pānīpat on the 1st of November 1760. Thus the Afghāns and the Marāthas met on the historic field of Pānīpat, where decisive contests had been fought in former ages. The strength of the Afghān army was 60,000, half of which were the Abdālī's own subjects (23,000 horse and 7,000 foot) and the other half his Indian allies (7,000 horse and 23,000 foot). The Marātha army consisted of 45,000 soldiers in cavalry and infantry. Besides having superior horses, the Abdālī had artillery more efficient and mobile than that of the Marāthas, and his officers were clad in armour which the Marāthas hardly wore. In respect of their manner of campaigning, marching and discipline, the Afghān army was superior to the Marātha host. "The strict enforcement of order in camp and battlefield, the rigid punishment of the least disobedience in any subordinate, the control of every officer's movements according to the plan of the supreme chief, the proper gradation of officers forming an unbroken chain between the generalissimo and the common soldier, the regular transmission of his orders by an efficient staff organisation, and above all the fine control of the troops—which distinguished Ahmad Shāh's army—were unapproached by any other Asiatic force of that age. Above all there was the transcendent genius for war and diplomacy and the towering personality of the master—who had risen like Nādir from nothing and attained to almost the same pre-eminence of fortune and invincibility in war."

After a few minor skirmishes and battles near Pānīpat for about two months and a half, during which period the Marātha army suffered some losses and was reduced almost to starvation owing to lack of provisions, it marched to give battle in the morning of



From V. A. Smith: "The Oxford History of India" (Clarendon Press).

PLAN OF THIRD BATTLE OF PĀNĪPAT

A. Pānīpat town and Marātha camp. B. The Durrānī camp. C. Ahmad Shāh's advanced tent. The numbers refer to the various divisions.

14th January, 1761. The Abdālī kept in the centre 18,000 of his own national troops in charge of his *wazīr*, Shāh Walī Khān, while two other corps of about 5,000 each, composed mostly of cavalry, were placed at his extreme right and left. Nājib and Shujā were placed on the left and the other Ruhelas on the right of his centre.

The Marāthas were arranged by the Bhāo in three wings—the centre being under his personal command, the left one being composed of the regular sepoys of Ibrāhīm Khān Gārdī, and the right one of the contingents of Malhār Rāo Holkar and Jānkojī Sindhia. The Marāthas began the offensive with a cannonade, and fought with the valour of despair, gaining some initial successes. Ibrāhīm Khān Gārdī charged the right wing of the Durrānī army so furiously that about eight to nine thousand of the Ruhelas were wounded or slain. Sadāshiv Rāo Bhāo attacked the Durrānī centre under Shāh Walī Khān and pressed it so hard that he seemed to carry everything before him. But the Abdālī reinforced his centre and right at the psychological hour with about 13,000 fresh troops, which turned the scale decisively against the already exhausted Marāthas. The Bhāo, however, continued to fight with reckless valour against enormous odds, but to no avail. At a quarter past two in the afternoon Vishwās Rāo was shot dead. This made the Bhāo desperate and he made another attempt to retrieve the fortunes of his people. But this also failed at about a quarter to three and "in a twinkle of the eye, the Marātha army vanished from the field like camphor". Five Durrānī horsemen, greedy for the costly dress of the Bhāo, cut his head off. Thus fell Sadāshiv Rāo in defence of the honour of his nation, though it must be admitted that the failure of the Marāthas in the field of Pānīpat was largely due to his disregard for others' opinions and miscalculated plans. The supreme leaders of the defeated Marātha army had fallen on the field, and thousands of soldiers and other people of all descriptions, men, women and children, were massacred. "It was, in short," writes Sir J. N. Sarkar, "a nation-wide disaster like Flodden Field; there was not a home in Mahārāshtra that had not to mourn the loss of a member, and several houses their very heads. An entire generation of leaders was cut off at one stroke." The victors captured immense booty. The Marāthas lost 50,000 horses, 200,000 draught cattle, some thousands of camels, 500 elephants, besides cash and jewellery. The news of this awful disaster was conveyed to the Peshwā in a merchant's message: "Two pearls have been dissolved, twenty-two gold mohurs have been lost, and of the silver and copper the total cannot be cast up." The Peshwā, already suffering from a wasting disease, could not survive this national calamity. He died, broken-hearted, at Poona on the 23rd June, 1761.

The third battle of Pānīpat produced disastrous consequences for the Marāthas and seriously deflected the course of Marātha imperialism. Besides immense losses in men and money, the

moral effect of the defeat at Pānīpat was even greater. It revealed to the "Indian world that Marātha friendship was a very weak reed to lean upon in any real danger". The powerful Marātha confederacy henceforth lost its cohesion and the Peshwā's authority was terribly damaged. The Marāthas could never return to the position they had established before 1761. But it must not be thought that their power was irretrievably shattered by their discomfiture at Pānīpat. They quickly recovered some of their losses and made fresh attempts to re-establish their authority in Hindustān. The Abdālī could not stay in India as a permanent check on their revival, and he could not retain even the Punjab, where the Sikhs grew more and more troublesome. The next Peshwā, Mādhava Rāo I, a noble figure in Marātha history, "carried out the aims and objects of the Marātha policy as laid down by the first Peshwā" till he died in A.D. 1772. In considering the importance of the career of Mādhava Rāo I, Grant Duff observes that "the plains of Pānīpat were not more fatal to the Marātha Empire than the early end of this excellent prince". The Marāthas restored the exiled Mughul Emperor, Shāh 'Ālam II, to the capital of his forefathers in 1772; in 1789 Mahādājī Sindhia made himself a dictator at Delhi; and before being finally crushed, the Marāthas thrice opposed British attempts to establish dominion in India.

But none the less the third battle of Pānīpat "decided the fate of India". "The Marāthas and the Muhammadans weakened each other in that deadly conflict, facilitating the aims of the British for Indian supremacy." The rising British power got thereby the opportunity it needed so much to strengthen and consolidate its authority in India. "If Plassey had sown the seeds of British supremacy in India, Pānīpat afforded time for their maturing and striking roots." When the Marāthas again tried to check the supremacy of the English in India, the latter had been able to effect an immense improvement in their position.

CHAPTER VI

MUGHUL ADMINISTRATION

1. Nature of the Mughul Government

THE establishment of the Mughul administration, on ideas and principles different from those of the Sultāns of Delhi, was mainly the work of Akbar. Of his two predecessors, Bābur and Humāyūn, the former had neither time nor opportunity, and the latter neither inclination nor ability, to elaborate a system of civil government. While gifted with political genius of a high order, Akbar was indebted in certain respects to the Sūr example of administrative organisation. The Mughul government was a "combination of Indian and extra-Indian elements". It was, more correctly speaking, "the Perso-Arabic system in an Indian setting". It was also essentially military in nature and every officer of the Mughul State had to be enrolled in the army list. It was necessarily a centralised autarchy, and the king's power was unlimited. His word was law, and his will none could dispute. He was the supreme authority in the State, the head of the government, the commander of the State forces, the fountain of justice, and the chief legislator. He was the Khalifah of God, required to obey the scriptures and Islamic traditions, but in practice a strong king could act in defiance of sacred law if he so liked. There was nothing like a cabinet of ministers in the modern sense of the term. The ministers could not claim to be consulted as a matter of right; it was entirely a matter of the Emperor's pleasure to accept their advice or not. Much depended, indeed, on the personality of the Emperor and his ministers. A wise ruler like Shāh Jahān wanted invariably to consult a Sa'dullah Khān, while a minister like Husain 'Ālī Khān would have little regard, even open contempt, for his crowned puppets. The first six Mughul rulers of India possessed, however, a strong commonsense, and their autocracy did not, therefore, degenerate into an unbearable tyranny trampling on the rights and customs of the people. Endowed with the spirit of "benevolent despots", these rulers worked hard for the good of their subjects, in one way or another, especially

in the regions round the central capital and the seats of viceregal governments in the provinces. But the State in those days "did not undertake any socialistic work, nor interfered with the lives of the villagers so long as there was not violent crime or defiance of royal authority in the locality". From one point of view, the enormous power of the Mughul emperors was strictly limited. Their orders could not always be easily enforced in the distant corners of the Empire, not to speak of certain hilly parts of Chota Nāgpur and the Santāl Parganās, which most probably never acknowledged their sway. When we find almost each and every Emperor issuing orders for the abolition of the same kind of taxes and cesses in the very first year of his reign, we are led to conclude that previous attempts to abolish these had proved ineffectual and inoperative. There are copious references in the records of the English factories in India to show that even in the days of Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb, not to speak of the reigns of their weak successors, the *subahdārs*, the provincial *diwāns*, and the customs-officers, occasionally acted contrary to the orders of the central government, mostly out of selfish motives.

2. The Nobility

Owing to several factors, the Mughul nobility was a heterogeneous body, composed of diverse elements like Turk, Tartar, Persian and Indian, Muslim and Hindu, and could not, therefore, organise itself as a powerful baronial class. Some Europeans also received titles of nobility. In theory, the nobility was not hereditary but purely official in character. A noble had only a life interest in his *jāgīr*, which escheated to the crown on his death; and the titles or emoluments could not usually be transmitted from father to son. The effect of the system of escheat was, as Sir J. N. Sarkar has observed, "most harmful". The nobles led extravagant lives and squandered away all their money in unproductive luxury during their life-time. It also "prevented India from having one of the strongest safeguards of public liberty and checks on royal autocracy, namely, an independent hereditary peerage, whose position and wealth did not depend on the king's favour in every generation, and who could, therefore, afford to be bold in their criticism of the royal caprice and their opposition to the royal tyranny".

3. Public Service and Bureaucracy

To maintain the military strength of the Empire, it was necessary for the Mughuls to employ a large number of foreign adventurers.

Though Akbar inaugurated the policy of "India for Indians" and threw open official careers to the Hindus, yet the foreign elements predominated in the Mughul public service. The general character of the public services remained unaltered during the reigns of Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān. But deterioration in their efficiency began during the reign of the former, and became striking during the reign of his son and more so in the reign of Aurangzeb. Thus Prince Akbar wrote to Aurangzeb plainly in 1681: "The clerks and officers of state have taken to the practice of traders, and are buying posts with gold and selling them for shameful considerations. Every one who eats salt destroys the salt-cellar."

Every officer of the State held a *mansab* or official appointment of rank and profit, and, as such, was bound theoretically to supply a number of troops for the military service of the State. Thus the *mansabdārs* formed the official nobility of the country, and this system was the "army, the peerage, and the civil administration, all rolled into one". Akbar classified the office-holders into thirty-three grades, ranging from "commanders of 10" to "commanders of 10,000". Till the middle of Akbar's reign, the highest rank an ordinary officer could hold was that of a commander of 5,000; the more exalted grades between commanders of 7,000 and 10,000 were reserved for members of the royal family. But towards the end of his reign this restriction was relaxed, and, under his successors, the officers rose to much higher positions. The *mansabdārs* were directly recruited, promoted, suspended or dismissed by the Emperors. Each grade carried a definite rate of pay, out of which its holder was expected to maintain a quota of horses, elephants, beasts of burden and carts. But the *mansabdārs* rarely fulfilled this condition. Irvine writes that "in spite of musterings and brandings we may safely assume that very few *mansabdārs* kept up at full strength even the quota of horsemen for which they received pay". A *mansabdāri* dignity was not hereditary. The State Service was not specialised, and an officer might be entrusted at any moment with an entirely new duty. Akbar's wonderful capacity for "picking the right man for the right job" checked the evils of this system, but a deterioration set in later on with the change in the personality of the rulers.

The officers of the Mughul government received their salaries in two ways. Either they received them in cash from the State, or occasionally they were granted *jāgīrs* for a temporary period. They were not, however, given any ownership over the lands in their *jāgīrs*, but were only allowed to collect and enjoy the land revenue, equivalent to the amount of their salaries, from the

assigned tracts. "Any excess collected not only involved injustice towards the cultivators; it was a fraud against the State as well." *Jāgīrs* were frequently transferred from one *mansabdār* to another. The *jāgīr* system, however, gave some undue power and independence to the holders of *jāgīrs*; and Akbar, like Sher Shāh, was justified in trying to remunerate his officers by cash payments, and in converting *jāgīr* into *khalsā* lands, whenever possible. Whether paid in cash or in *jāgīrs*, the Mughul public servants enjoyed, as we know from the *Āīn-i-Akbarī*, inordinately high salaries,[1] which attracted most enterprising adventurers from Western and Central Asia. Various evils crept into the Mughul public services after the reign of Aurangzeb, if not earlier.

4. Departments of Government and Chief Officers

Though the Mughul Emperors had absolute powers, they appointed a number of officers in the different departments of the Government for the transaction of its multitudinous affairs. The chief departments of the State were: (*a*) the Imperial Household under the *Khān-i-Sāmān*, (*b*) the Exchequer under the *Diwān*, (*c*) the Military Pay and Accounts Office under the *Mīr Bakhshī*, (*d*) the Judiciary under the *Chief Qāzī*, (*e*) Religious Endowments and Charities under the Chief *Sadr* or *Sadr-us-Sudūr*, and (*f*) the Censorship of Public Morals under the *Muhtasib*. The *Diwān* or *Wazīr* was usually the highest officer in the State, being in sole charge of revenues and finance. The *Bakhshī* discharged a variety of functions. While he was the Paymaster-General of all the officers of the State, who "theoretically belonged to the military department", he was also responsible for the recruiting of the army, and for maintaining lists of *mansabdārs* and other high officials; and when preparing for a battle he presented a complete muster-roll of the army before the Emperor. The *Khān-i-Sāmān* or the Lord High Steward had charge of the whole imperial household "in reference to both great and small things". The *Muhtasibs* or Censors of Public Morals looked after the enforcement of the Prophet's commands and the laws of morality. The other officers, somewhat inferior in status to those mentioned above, were the *Mir Ātish* or *Dārogā-i-Topkhānā* (head of the artillery), the *Dārogā* of *Dāk chowkī* (head of the correspondence department),

[1] Making deductions for the monthly expenses of maintaining troops and other incidental expenses, Moreland calculates that a *mansabdār* of "5.000" received a net monthly salary of at least Rs. 18,000, one of "1,000" at least Rs. 5,000, and "a commander of 500" at least Rs. 1,000 a month. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 66 ff.

the *Dārogā* of the Mint, the *Mīr Māl* or the Lord Privy Seal, the *Mustaufī* or the Auditor-General, the *Nāzir-i-Buyutāt* or the Superintendent of the Imperial Workshop, the *Mushriff* or the Revenue Secretary, the *Mīr Bahri* or the Lord of the Admiralty, the *Mīr Barr* or the Superintendent of Forests, the *Wāqa-i-navis* or News-Reporters, the *Mīr Arz* or the officer in charge of petitions presented to the Emperor, the *Mīr Manzil* or the Quartermaster-General, and the *Mīr Tozak* or the Master of Ceremonies.

5. The Police

So far as the rural areas were concerned, the Mughuls introduced no new arrangements for the prevention and detection of crimes. These remained, as from time immemorial, under the headman of the village and his subordinate watchmen. This system, which afforded a fair degree of security in the local areas with only occasional disturbances in times of disorder, survived till the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the cities and towns, all police duties, including the task of maintaining public order and decency, were entrusted to the *Kotwāls*, whose duties, as enumerated in the *Āīn-i-Akbarī*, were multifarious: (i) to detect thieves, (ii) to regulate prices and check weights and measures, (iii) to keep watch at night and patrol the city, (iv) to keep up registers of houses, frequented roads, and of citizens, and watch the movements of strangers, (v) to employ spies from among the vagabonds, gather information about the affairs of the neighbouring villages, and the income and expenditure of the various classes of people, (vi) to prepare an inventory of, and take charge of, the property of deceased or missing persons who left no heirs, (vii) to prevent the slaughter of oxen, buffaloes, horse or camels, and (viii) to prevent the burning of women against their will, and circumcision below the age of twelve. Sir J. N. Sarkar believes that this long list of the *Kotwāl's* duties in the *Āīn* represents "only the ideal for the *Kotwāl*" and not "the actual state of things". But Manucci also gives from personal observation an exhaustive account of the *Kotwāl's* duties. It is, however, certain that the *Kotwāl's* main business was to preserve peace and public security in the urban areas. In the districts or *sarkārs*, law and order were maintained usually by officers like the *Faujdārs*. "The *faujdār*, as his name suggests, was only the commander of a military force stationed in the country. He had to put down smaller rebellions, disperse or arrest robber gangs, take cognizance of all violent crimes, and

make demonstrations of force to overawe opposition to the revenue authorities, or the criminal judge, or the censor." The police arrangements were in some respects effective, though "the state of public security varied greatly from place to place and from time to time".

6. Law and Justice

Nothing like modern legislation, or a written code of laws, existed in the Mughul period. The only notable exceptions to this were the twelve ordinances of Jahāngīr and the *Fatāwa-i-'Ālamgīrī*, a digest of Muslim law prepared under Aurangzeb's supervision. The judges chiefly followed the Quranic injunctions or precepts, the *Fatāwas* or previous interpretations of the Holy Law by eminent jurists, and the *qanuns* or ordinances of the Emperors. They did not ordinarily disregard customary laws and sometimes followed principles of equity. Above all, the Emperor's interpretations prevailed, provided they did not run counter to the sacred laws.

The Mughul Emperors regarded speedy administration of justice as one of their important duties, and their officers did not enjoy any special protection in this respect under anything like Administrative Law. "If I were guilty of an unjust act," said Akbar, "I would rise in judgment against myself." Peruschi writes on the authority of Monserrate that "as to the administration of justice he is most zealous and watchful". The love of justice of the other Emperors, like Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb, has been testified to by some contemporary European travellers. Though approach to the Emperor through all kinds of official obstructions was not very easy, at least two Mughul Emperors, Akbar and Jahāngīr, granted to their subjects the right of direct petitioning (which was only won in England after a hard fight). The latter allowed a chain with bells to be hung outside his palace to enable petitioners to bring their grievances to the notice of the Emperor.

The *Qāzī-ul-Qazāt* or the Chief *Qāzī* was the principal judicial officer in the realm. He appointed *Qāzīs* in every provincial capital. The *Qāzīs* made investigations into, and tried, civil as well as criminal cases of both the Hindus and the Muslims; the *Muftis* expounded Muslim Law; and the *Mīr Adls* drew up and pronounced judgments. The *Qāzīs* were expected to be "just, honest, impartial, to hold trials in the presence of the parties and at the court-house and the seat of government, not to accept presents from the people where they served, nor to attend entertainments given by anybody and everybody, and they were asked to know poverty to be their glory". But in practice they abused their authority, and, as Sir

J. N. Sarkar observes, "the *Qāzī's* department became a byword and reproach in Mughul times". There were no primary courts below those of the *Qāzīs*, and the villagers and the inhabitants of smaller towns, having no *Qāzīs* over them, settled their differences locally "by appeal to the caste courts or *panchāyets*, the arbitration of an impartial umpire (*sālis*), or by a resort to force". The *Sadr-us-sudūr* or the chief *Sadr* exercised supervision over the lands granted by the Emperors or princes to pious men, scholars and monks, and tried cases relating to these. Below him there was a local *sadr* in every province.

Above the urban and provincial courts was the Emperor himself, who, as the "Khalif of the Age", was the fountain of justice and the final court of appeal. Sometimes he acted as a court of first instance too. Fines could be imposed and severe punishments, like amputation, mutilation and whipping, could be inflicted by the courts without any reference to the Emperor, but his consent was necessary in inflicting capital punishment. There was no regular jail system, but the prisoners were confined in forts.

7. The Revenue System

The revenues of the Mughul Empire may be grouped under two heads—central or imperial and local or provincial. The local revenue, which was apparently collected and spent without reference to the finance authorities of the central government, was derived from various minor duties and taxes levied on "production and consumption, on trades and occupations, on various incidents of social life, and most of all on transport". The major sources of central revenue were land revenue, customs, mint, inheritance, plunder and indemnities, presents, monopolies and the poll-tax. Of these, land revenue formed, as in old days, the most important source of the State income.

The important revenue experiments of the Sūrs were undone in the period of confusion and disorders following the reigns of Sher Shāh and Islām Shāh. But the old machinery of government and the time-honoured customs and procedures must have been inherited by Akbar, who found at his accession three kinds of land in the country—the *Khalsā* or crown-lands, the *Jāgīr* lands, enjoyed by some nobles who collected the local revenues, out of which they sent a portion to the central exchequer and kept the rest for themselves, and the *Sayūrghāl* lands, granted on free tenure. After securing his freedom from the influence of Bairam and that of the ladies of the harem, Akbar realised the importance

of reorganising the finances of his growing empire, which were in a hopelessly confused state. Thus in 1570–1571, Muzaffar Khān Turbatī, assisted by Rājā Todar Mall, prepared a revised assessment of the land revenue, "based on estimates framed by the local *Qānūngoes* and checked by ten superior *Qānūngoes* at headquarters". After Gujarāt had been conquered, Todar Mall effected there a regular survey of the land, and the assessment was made "with reference to the area and quality of the land". In 1575–1576 Akbar made a new and disastrous experiment by abolishing the old revenue areas and dividing the whole of the Empire, with the exception of the provinces of Gujarāt, Bengal and Bihār, into a large number of units, each yielding one *kror* (crore) a year, and placed over each of them an officer called the *Krori*, whose duties were to collect revenues and encourage cultivation. But the *Kroris* soon grew corrupt and their tyranny reduced the peasants to great misery. Their offices were, therefore, abolished and the old revenue divisions were restored, though the title of *Krori* continued to survive at least till the reign of Shāh Jahān.

Important revenue reforms were introduced in 1582, when Todar Mall was appointed the *Diwān-i-Ashraf*. Hitherto assessments were fixed annually on the basis of production and statistics of current prices, and the demands of the State thus varied from year to year. Todar Mall established a standard or "regulation" system of revenue-collection, the chief features of which were (i) survey and measurement of land, (ii) classification of land, (iii) fixation of rates. Lands were carefully surveyed, and for measurement the old units, whose length fluctuated with the change of season, were replaced by the *Ilāhī Gaz* or yard, which was equal to about thirty-three inches, *tanab* or tent-rope, and *jarib* of bamboos joined by iron rings, which assured a constant measure. Land was classified into four classes according to "the continuity or discontinuity of cultivation": (i) *Polaj* or land capable of being annually cultivated, (ii) *Parautī* or land kept fallow for some time to recover productive capacity, (iii) *Chachar* or land that had lain fallow for three or four years, and (iv) *Banjar* or land uncultivated for five years or longer. Only the area actually cultivated was assessed, and, in order to ascertain the average produce of land belonging to each class, the mean of the three grades into which it was divided was taken into consideration. The demand of the State was fixed at one-third of the actual produce, which the ryots could pay either in cash or in kind. The cash rates varied according to crops. This revenue system, as applied to Northern India, Gujarāt, and, with some modifications, to the

Deccan, was *rayatwārī*, that is, "the actual cultivators of the soil were the persons responsible for the annual payment of the fixed revenue". In the outlying portions of the Empire, this system was not applied, but each of these was dealt with as local circumstances required.

For purposes of administration and revenue collection, the Empire was divided into *subahs*, which again were subdivided into *sarkārs*, each of which in turn comprised a number of *paraganās*. Each *paraganā* was a union of several villages. The *amalguzār* or revenue-collector in charge of a district was assisted by a large subordinate staff. Apart from the village *Muqaddam* (headman) and the village *Patwārī*, who were servants of the village community and not of the State, there were measurers and *kārkuns*, who prepared the seasonal crop statistics; the *Qānūngo*, who kept records of the revenue payable by the villages; the *Bitikchī* or accountant; and the *Potdār* or district treasurer. These officers were instructed to collect revenue with due care and caution and "not to extend the hand of demand out of season". The Emperors were for ever "issuing orders to their officers to show leniency and consideration to the peasants in collecting the revenue, to give up all *abwābs* and to relieve local distress". There are instances in the reigns of Shāh Jāhān and Aurangzeb of extortionate revenue officials and even provincial governors being dismissed on complaints being made against them by the subjects to the Emperors. Though the lower revenue officers, especially those in the outlying provinces and districts, were not above corruption and malpractices, "the highest were, on the whole, just and statesmanlike" with few exceptions.

The success or failure of the revenue system thus organised must have depended on the quality and nature of the administration at the centre, and evils could not but appear when the administrative machinery was getting out of gear in Aurangzeb's reign. But on the whole its principles were sound and "the practical instructions to the officials all that could be desired". The ryots got a certain amount of security and the fluctuations of the State revenue were prevented, or at least minimised. Further, the ryots were not evicted from their holdings for default of payment, and the "custom of payment by the division of the crop", on the basis of the actual produce of a year, was better than the modern money rent system by which one has to pay the fixed amount irrespective of the harvest of the year. The demand at the rate of one-third, though rather high, as compared with one-sixth prescribed by Hindu law and custom or with what a modern landowner gets, was

not a heavy burden on the peasants, who were compensated by the State with the abolition or remission of various cesses and taxes.

8. The Provincial Government

In 1579–1580 Akbar divided his Empire into twelve provinces, the number of which rose to fifteen[1] towards the close of his reign, to seventeen in the reign of Jahāngīr and to twenty-one in the time of Aurangzeb. "The administrative agency in the provinces of the Mughul Empire was an exact miniature of the Central Government." The Governor (styled the *Sipāh Sālār*, Commander-in-Chief, or *Sāhib Subah*, Lord of the Province, or simply *Subahdār*, and officially described as the *Nāzim*) was the head of the civil as well as military administration of each *subah*. He had a staff of subordinate officers under him, like the *Diwān*, the *Bakhshī*, the *Faujdār*, the *Kotwāl*, the *Qāzī*, the *Sadr*, the *'Āmil*, the *Bitikchī*, the *Potdār* and the *Wāqa-i-navis*. The *Diwān* or revenue-chief of a province often acted as the rival of the *Subahdār*. Each was enjoined "to keep a strict watch over the other" so that none of them could grow over-powerful.

9. The Army

No large standing army was maintained by the State, but theoretically "all able-bodied citizens of the empire were potential soldiers of the imperial army". The history of the Mughul army is largely the history of the *Mansabdārī* system, the principal features of which have already been noted. Besides the *Mansabdārs*, there were the *Dākhilīs* or supplementary troopers placed under the command of *Mansabdārs* and paid by the State, and *Ahadīs* or a body of "gentleman troopers, a special class of horsemen, who were generally round the Emperor's person, and owed allegiance to no one else". The *Mansabdārī* system was not free from corruption. "False musters," writes Irvine, "were an evil from which the Mughul army suffered in its most palmy days. Nobles would lend to each other the men to make up their quota, or needy idlers from the bazaṛs would be mounted on the first baggage pony that came to hand and counted in with the others as efficient soldiers". Steps were taken by Akbar's Government to remove these evil practices. Regulations were introduced for periodical musters, a *chihrāh* or descriptive roll of a *Mansabdār* was drawn

[1] Āgra, Allahābād, Oudh, Delhi, Lahore, Multān, Kābul, Ajmer, Bengal, Bihār, Ahmadābād, Mālwa, Berar, Khāndesh, Ahmadnagar.

up, "showing his name, his father's name, his tribe or caste, his place of origin, followed by details of his personal appearance"; and the system of branding horses, known as *Dāgh-o-mahalli* or simply *Dāgh*, was revived. But these measures could not effectively check the evils.

To express it in modern terms, the Mughul forces were composed of (i) cavalry, (ii) infantry, (iii) artillery and (iv) navy. The cavalry was the most important of all these branches. The infantry was largely composed of men drawn from ordinary townsmen and peasants; and "as a part of the fighting strength of the army it was insignificant". Guns, manufactured within the country and also imported from outside, were used in wars by Bābur, Humāyūn, and Akbar, but "the artillery was much more perfect and numerous in 'Ālamgīr's reign" than before. The artillery was wholly state-paid. There was nothing like any strong navy in the modern sense of the term, but Abul Fazl writes of an "Admiralty Department", the functions of which were (i) to build boats of all kinds for river transport, (ii) to fit out strong boats for transporting war-elephants, (iii) to recruit expert seamen, (iv) to supervise the rivers, and (v) to impose, collect or remit river duties and tolls. A fleet of 768 armed vessels and boats was stationed at Dacca to protect the coast of Bengal against the Mugs and the Arākānese pirates. But the naval establishment of the Mughuls does not seem to have been very formidable.

The Mughul army, though not so inefficient as some writers would ask us to believe, was not, however, without certain defects. Firstly, it was not a national army, but was a mixture of diverse elements, each trying to follow its own peculiar methods and manœuvres. Thus, though its numerical strength increased as years went on, it grew cumbrous and hard to be controlled and managed. Secondly, the soldiers did not owe direct allegiance to the Emperor, but were more attached to their immediate recruiters and superiors, whose acute jealousies and bitter rivalries often destroyed the chances of success in campaigns. Lastly, the pomp and display of the Mughul army in camp, and on the march, were largely responsible for marring its efficiency. Akbar could at times depart from this practice. But generally the imperial army looked like "an unwieldy moving city" and was "encumbered with all the lavish paraphernalia of the imperial court, including a proportion of the harem and its attendants, mounted on elephants and camels, a travelling audience-hall, musicians' gallery, offices, workshops, and bazars. Elephants and camels carried the treasure; hundreds of bullock-carts bore the military stores; an

army of mules transported the imperial furniture and effects". Referring to the grand camp of the Emperor Aurangzeb at Ahmadnagar, Grant Duff comments that "it proved a serious encumbrance to the movements of his army, while the devouring expense of such establishments pressed hard on his finances, and soon crippled even the most necessary of his military and political arrangements". This sort of camp life naturally produced luxury and indiscipline in the army. The inevitable deterioration set in under Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān and manifested itself fully in the time of Aurangzeb. The army became incapable of "swift action or brilliant adventure". In this respect, the then light cavalry of Shivājī, maintained by him under strict discipline, was far better than the Mughul army.

CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

THE real history of the people in Mughul India, that is, of their social life and economic condition, is of greater interest and importance for us to-day than mere catalogues of political events or military campaigns. The sources for studying it are indeed meagre, but valuable information can be gleaned from the accounts of contemporary European travellers and records of the European factories; and incidental references are available in contemporary historical works in Persian as well as vernacular literatures of the period.

1. Social Conditions

A. Structure of Society

Society looked like a feudal organisation with the king at its apex. Next in rank to the king were the official nobles, who enjoyed special honours and privileges, which never fell to the lot of the common people. This naturally produced a difference in their standard of living. The former rolled in wealth and comforts, while the condition of the latter was comparatively pitiable. With abundant resources at their disposal, the rich naturally indulged in luxury and intemperance, and the apprehension of escheat of the wealth and property of the nobles at death destroyed their incentive to thrift. Excessive addiction to wine and women was a very common vice among the aristocrats. We are told by Abul Fazl that the Emperor had a seraglio of 5,000 women, supervised by a separate staff of female officers. Francisco Pelsaert, the chief of the Dutch factory at Āgra in the time of Jahāngīr, observes that "the *mahals* of the rich were adorned internally with lascivious sensuality, wanton and reckless festivity, superfluous pomp, inflated pride, and ornamental daintiness", and he denounces their debauchery in strong terms. The food and dress of the wealthy were rich and costly. They lived in highly decorated palatial buildings and amused themselves with outdoor sports as well as indoor games.

It should be noted that the existence of an alien nobility did not usually cause any heavy drain of the country's wealth to foreign lands, as none of the class was allowed to carry it outside. The nobles originally possessed qualities which made them efficient servants of the State so long as it retained its vigour, but they began to lose their old usefulness, and grew more demoralised, with the closing years of the reign of Shāh Jahān. Further deterioration set in during the reign of Aurangzeb and in the eighteenth century. The rivalries and conspiracies of the selfish and debased nobility of the later period, besides casting a malign influence on social life, were largely responsible for the political disorders of the age.

Below the nobles, there was "a small and frugal" middle class, not given to "ostentatious expenditure" but living on a standard suited to their respective offices and professions. The merchants in general led simple and temperate lives. According to some European writers, the merchants of the western coast, having made much wealth out of their extensive commerce, lived in a comparatively rich style and indulged in luxuries. The condition of the lower orders was hard as compared with that of the two higher classes. They could have no sufficient clothing; and woollen garments and shoes were above their means. As their other demands were few, they did not suffer from want of ordinary food under normal conditions; but, in times of famine and scarcity, their miseries must have been very great. Francisco Pelsaert writes with the experience of seven years that there were in his time "three classes of people who are indeed nominally free but whose status differs very little from voluntary slavery—workmen, peons or servants and shopkeepers". Their work was not voluntary, wages were low, food and houses poor, and they were subject to the oppressions of the imperial officers. The shopkeepers, though sometimes rich and respected, generally kept their wealth hidden, or, as Pelsaert writes, "they will be victims of a trumped-up charge, and whatever they have will be confiscated in legal form, because informers swarm like flies round the governors and make no difference between friends and enemies, perjuring themselves when necessary in order to remain in favour". Towards the end of Shāh Jahān's reign, the peasants were more harassed by the provincial governors, their condition became worse, and the evil of pauperism increased.

B. Social habits and practices

The vice of intemperance was not so common among the ordinary people as among the rich. "None of the people there," remarks Terry, "are at any time seen drunk (though they might find liquor enough to do it) but the very offal and dregs of that people, and these rarely or very seldom." They were temperate in their diet, and were civil to strangers.

Both Hindus and Muslims believed in the maxims and predictions of astrology. Prominent social practices of the period were *satī*, child-marriage, *kulinism* and the dowry-system. Akbar tried to regulate social usages in such a way as to make the consent of both the bride and the bridegroom, and the permission of the parents, necessary for marriage contracts. He also sought to check marriage before puberty by either party, marriages between near relatives, acceptance of high dowries, and polygamy. But his attempts do not seem to have been effective in practice. Social evils increased during the eighteenth century, particularly in Bengal, and they have been frequently referred to in the works of contemporary European writers like Bolts, Craufurd and Scrafton, and also in contemporary literature. The Marātha society of the time did not, however, encourage acceptance of dowries. The Peshwās exercised an effective control over the social and religious affairs of Mahārāshtra, and their marriage regulations "evinced", remarks Dr. Sen, "a liberal spirit that may be profitably imitated by their modern descendants". They were opposed to forcible marriages, but informal marriages were occasionally permitted by them if the motives of the contracting parties were correct. Widow-remarriage was prevalent among the non-Brāhmaṇas of Mahārāshtra, as also among the Jāts of the Punjab and the Jumnā valley; and polyandry was not unknown among the latter. In the middle of the eighteenth century, Rājā Rājballabh of Dacca made an unsuccessful attempt to introduce widow-remarriage. Though the women were generally "subject to the will of their masters", instances of their taking an active part in political affairs are not rare.

C. Deterioration in the eighteenth century

In general, however, we notice a regrettable deterioration in social life during the eighteenth century, which forms, from many points of view, one of the darkest periods in the history of India. A modern writer has justly remarked that by the end of this century

and the beginning of the next "in social usage, in politics, in the realm of religion and art, we had entered the zone of uncreative habit, of decadent tradition, and ceased to exercise our humanity".

One redeeming feature in this period of all-round decline was the continuity of the process of Hindu-Muslim rapprochement and amicable contact between the members of the two communities, in spite of the bitter political rivalries of several centuries. Akbar's reign is remarkably important and instructive for the existence of Hindu-Muslim harmony. Illustrations of this are not lacking even in the reign of Aurangzeb. Alāwal, a Muhammadan poet, who translated in the seventeenth century the Hindī poem *Padmāvat* into Bengali, was the author of several poems on Vaishṇava subjects. 'Abdullah Khān, one of the Sayyid brothers, observed the *Basant* and *Holī* festivals, and Sirāj-ud-daulah and Mīr Jāfar enjoyed *Holī* festivals along with their friends and relatives. It is said that on his death-bed Mīr Jāfar drank a few drops of water poured in libation over the idol of Kirīteswarī near Murshidābād. Daulat Rāo Sindhia and his officers joined Muharram processions in green dress like Muhammadans. It has been noted by a modern Indian writer on the authority of *Jām-i-Jahān Numā*, a Persian weekly of the early nineteenth century, how the Durgā Pujā was celebrated at the Delhi court so late as A.D. 1825.

2. Economic Conditions

A. Economic condition in pre-Akbarid days

We have very meagre information about the economic condition of India during the reigns of the first two Tīmūrīds. Most of the historians have questioned the accuracy of the description of Hindustān given by Bābur in his *Memoirs*. The *Humāyūn-nāmah* of Gulbadan Begam refers incidentally to the low prices prevailing in Hindustān; for example, at Amarkot, the birthplace of Akbar, the price of four goats was one rupee. The comprehensive economic reforms of Sher Shāh must have effected an improvement in the economic condition of the people in his kingdom, which was not very much disturbed at least so long as the Sūr administration retained its vigour.

B. Economic condition after the days of Akbar

So far as the economic condition of the country during the reigns of the great Mughuls, and those of the later Mughuls, is concerned, we get copious information from the *Āīn-i-Akbarī* and

some incidental references in some other works in Persian; from the accounts of contemporary European merchants, travellers and writers; from the records of the European factories in India; and also from contemporary Indian literature. We can only attempt here to give a brief survey of the important aspects of the economic condition of India during the centuries of Mughul rule.

C. Prosperous cities

Prosperity and plenty prevailed in the chief cities of India in the age of the great Mughuls. Writing in A.D. 1585, Fitch observed: "Āgra and Fatehpore are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London and very populous. Between Āgra and Fatehpore are twelve miles, and all the way is a market of victual and other things, as full as though a man were still in a town, and so many people as if a man were in a market." Terry refers to the Punjab as "a large province, and most fruitful. Lahore is the chief city thereof, built very large, and abounds both in people and riches, one of the principal cities for trade in all India". Monserrate asserted that in 1581 Lahore was "not second to any city in Europe or Asia". Burhānpur in Khāndesh was "very great, rich and full of people". Ahmadābād in Gujarāt has been described by Abul Fazl as "a noble city in a high state of prosperity", which "for the pleasantness of its climate and display of the choicest productions of the whole globe is almost unrivalled". In Eastern India there was much opulence in cities like Benares, Patna, Rājmahal, Burdwān, Huglī, Dacca and Chittāgong.

D. Communications

There was no want of communications, along roads and rivers, for the purposes of the vast mercantile traffic, though they compare unfavourably with those of the present day improved under scientific conditions. Of course, with the exception of certain highways, the roads were generally unmetalled, but the "main routes of land travel were clearly defined, in some cases by avenues of trees, and more generally by walled enclosures, known as *sarāis*, in which travellers and merchants could pass the night in comparative security". The rivers, some of which were navigable throughout the year and some through a part of it, afforded excellent means for the carriage of heavy traffic. Of course, the security of the communications depended greatly on the efficiency of the administration of the country. But even in the

eighteenth century the facility of river communication has been referred to by such writers as Dow, Rennell and Stavorinus, who had intimate knowledge of the province. There was a tradition of road-building activity on the part of the State since the early days of Indian history, which the great Sūr rulers imitated and the Mughuls also followed. A bridge was built at Jaunpur by Munīm Khān early in Akbar's reign. Jahāngīr constructed water-works at Burhānpur, and, under Shāh Jahān, 'Ālī Mardān Khān repaired or built the Rāvī canal in 1639, which benefited the people to a great extent.

E. Agriculture

The agricultural crops of the time were much the same as those of to-day. It is wrong to say that there was no localisation of crops as in the present day, for sugar was cultivated in many parts of Bengal and Bihār and was carried to other parts of India; and indigo was cultivated in certain places of Northern India. Pelsaert definitely tells us of the large-scale production and manufacture of indigo in the Jumnā valley and Central India. To meet the demands of widespread manufactures of cotton and silk goods, both cotton and silk were cultivated extensively in certain parts of India. Tobacco, introduced either late in 1604 or early in 1605, began to be cultivated by the people thereafter. Agricultural implements were also very much the same as those of the present day, and such was the case with the agricultural system with the exception of the comparative absence of artificial irrigation. The tenants were often subjected to the oppression and exactions of local officials.

F. Famines

The sufferings of the peasants knew no bounds during the frequent outbreaks of famine, caused by the failure of seasonal rains, especially because the Mughul State then made no systematic and prolonged efforts to provide relief and effected no substantial remissions in revenue collection. The little that they did was insufficient to alleviate the acute miseries of the myriads of people who died of starvation and the pestilence that closely followed it. A terrible famine broke out in 1556–1557 in the neighbourhood of Āgra and Biyāna, and Badāūnī "with his own eyes witnessed the fact that men ate their own kind and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them. . . . The whole country was a desert, and no husbandman remained to till the ground". Gujarāt, one of the richest

provinces in India, was stricken with famine and pestilence in 1573–1574, so that "the inhabitants, rich and poor, fled from the country and were scattered abroad". The country was so greatly affected by the horrors of a severe famine lasting from 1594 to 1598 that "men ate their own kind. The streets and roads were blocked up with dead bodies and no assistance could be rendered for their removal". Akbar made an attempt to relieve the distress of the people by placing Shaikh Farid of Bukhārā, a naturally kind-hearted man, in charge of relief measures. But the miseries of the people, due to this catastrophic visitation, were too appalling to be removed by such steps. An equally horrible famine devastated the Deccan and Gujarāt in 1630–1632. The horrors of this calamity were so great that, as 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī, the official historian of the reign of Shāh Jahān, writes, "men began to devour each other, and the flesh of a son was preferred to his love". A Dutch merchant, who witnessed the calamity, notes that "men lying in the street, not yet dead, were cut up by others, and men fed on living men, so that even in the streets, and still more on road journeys, men ran great danger of being murdered or eaten". Shāh Jahān "opened a few soup-kitchens", distributed 1½ lacs of rupees in charity and remitted one-eleventh of the land-revenue assessment; but this could not suffice to mitigate the sufferings of the starving people. There were occasional outbreaks of famine during the succeeding years till the close of Aurangzeb's reign, but none was so severe in nature as that of 1630–1632.

G. Industry and Crafts

One of the most important factors in the economic history of India during the period under review was the extensive and varied industrial activity of the people, which besides supplying the needs of the local aristocracy and merchants could meet the demands of traders coming from Europe and other parts of Asia. By far the most important industry in India during this period was the manufacture of cotton cloth. The principal centres of cotton manufacture were distributed throughout the country, as, for example, at Patan in Gujarāt, Burhānpur in Khāndesh, Jaunpur, Benares, Patna and some other places in the United Provinces and Bihār, and many cities and villages in Orissa and Bengal. The whole country from Orissa to East Bengal looked like a big cotton factory, and the Dacca district was specially reputed for its delicate muslin fabrics, "the best and finest cloth made of cotton" that was in all India. Pelsaert notes that at Chābāspur and Sonārgāon in

East Bengal "all live by the weaving industry and the produce has the highest reputation and quality". Bernier observes: "There is in *Bengale* such a quantity of cotton and silk, that the Kingdom may be called the common storehouse for those two kinds of merchandise, not of Hindoustan or the Empire of the *Great Mogul* only, but of all the neighbouring kingdoms, and even of Europe." The dyeing industry, too, was in a flourishing condition. Terry tells us that coarser cotton cloths were either dyed or printed with a "variety of well-shaped and well-coloured flowers or figures, which are so fixed in the cloth that no water can wash them out". Silk-weaving, limited in scope as compared with cotton manufacture, was also an important industry of a section of the people. Abul Fazl writes that it received a considerable impetus in the reign of Akbar due to the imperial patronage. Bengal was the premier centre of silk production and manufacture and supplied the demands of the Indian and European merchants from other parts of India, though silk-weaving was practised in Lahore, Āgra, Fathpur Sīkrī and Gujarāt. Moreland writes on the authority of Tavernier that, about the middle of the seventeenth century, the total production of silk in Bengal was "about 2½ million pounds out of which one million pounds were worked up locally, ¾ million were exported raw by the Dutch and ¾ million distributed over India, most of it going to Gujarāt, but some being taken by merchants from Central Asia". Shawl and carpet-weaving industries flourished under the patronage of Akbar; the former woven mainly from hair, having originated from Kāshmīr, was manufactured also at Lahore, and the latter at Lahore and Āgra. Woollen goods, chiefly coarse blankets, were also woven. Though India had lost her old vigorous maritime activity, the ship-building industry did not die out at this time, and we have references to it from contemporary literature. Saltpetre, used chiefly as an ingredient for gunpowder in India and also exported outside by the Dutch and English traders, was manufactured in widely distributed parts of India during the seventeenth century, particularly in Peninsular India and the Bihār section of the Indo-Gangetic region. Bihār henceforth enjoyed a special reputation for the manufacture of this article till the first half of the nineteenth century, and it was in high demand by the Europeans for use in wars in their countries. Besides these major industries, we have testimony regarding various crafts during the Mughul period. Edward Terry noticed that "many curious boxes, trunks, standishes (pen-cases), carpets, with other excellent manufactures, may be there had". Pelsaert also writes that in Sind "ornamental disks, draught-

boards, writing-cases, and similar goods are manufactured locally in large quantities; they are pretty, inlaid with ivory and ebony, and used to be exported in large quantities from Goa, and the coast towns". Though the State encouraged manufactures, the weavers were directly financed in most cases by middlemen, who must have exploited them greatly. Further, as both Bernier and Pelsaert tell us, they suffered from harsh treatment at the hands of the nobles and officers, who forced them to sell goods at low prices and exacted from them forbidden *abwābs*. This deprived the weavers and craftsmen of the benefit of economic profit from their occupations, though the taste of the nobles for high-class manufactures kept up the tradition of their quality.

H. Prices

We learn from Abul Fazl, and some other writers, that the prices of articles, especially those of common consumption like rice, vegetables, spices, meat, livestock and milk, were very low. Edward Terry observes that "the plenty of provisions was very great throughout the whole country; . . . and everyone there may eat bread without scarceness". Smith writes that "the hired landless labourer in the time of Akbar and Jahāngīr probably had more to eat than he has now", but Moreland is of opinion that "speaking generally the masses lived on the same economic plane as now". It is certain that there was no golden age of opulence for the common people under the Mughuls, because though the prices of articles were cheap, their average income was proportionately low or perhaps lower. They did not, however, grovel in misery and smart under discontent, as their needs were few and the problems of life were not so complicated as those of the present day.

I. Mints and Currency

Akbar, like Sher Shāh, tried to regulate the currency of the State. Towards the end of 1577 he appointed Khwāja 'Abdus Samād of Shīrāz master of the imperial mint at Delhi, and one important officer was placed over each of the chief provincial mints in Bengal, Lahore, Jaunpur, Ahmadābād and Patna. During the reign of Shāh Jahān, one of the most important mints was at Surāt. Akbar issued gold, silver and copper coins, the first having no less than twenty-six varieties of different weights and value. In Akbar's time, the silver rupee of about 175 grains was equivalent

in value to 2*s.* 3*d.* sterling. Akbar also issued a square silver rupee known as the *jalālī*. As in Sher Shāh's currency, the chief copper coin of Akbar's time was the *dām*, also called *paisā* or *fulūs*, which weighed 323·5 grains, formed the ready money for both the rich and the poor, and was divided into twenty-five parts, known as *jītals*, for purposes of account. Mercantile affairs of the Empire during the reigns of Akbar and his successors were transacted in round gold *mohurs*, rupees and *dāms*. The coins of the Mughul State, especially those of Akbar, "were excellent in respect of purity of metal, fullness of weight, and artistic execution". The rupee was equivalent in value to forty *dāms* up to 1616 and thirty *dāms*, or a little more or less, from 1627 onwards. But there was no great alteration in currency after Akbar, though in 1659 the English merchants wrote to the authorities in England that "the new king, Oran Zeeb (Aurangzeb), hath raised his coine (silver) to $\frac{6}{8}$ per cent finer than formerly; which hath caused much trouble and contention between the merchants of Surat and Governor".

J. Foreign Trade

India had an active and considerable foreign trade, during the greater part of the Mughul period, with different countries of Asia and Europe. The chief imports of the country were bullion, raw silk, horses, metals, ivory, coral, amber, precious stones, velvets, brocades, broadcloth, perfumes, drugs, Chinese porcelain and African slaves, and her exports were various textiles, pepper, indigo, opium and other drugs, and miscellaneous goods. There were two main land routes for export trade on the north-west—from Lahore to Kābul and from Multān to Qandahār, while there were a few more in other parts. But the traffic along these routes was restricted and insecure. The sea and the rivers were more advantageous for commercial purposes. The chief ports of India were Lahorī Bandar in Sind; the group of Gujarāt ports like Surāt, Broach and Cambay; Bassein; Chaul; Dabul (modern Dabhol) in the Ratnagiri district; Goa and Bhatkal; Malābār ports, the most important of which were Calicut and Cochin; Negapatam, Masulipatam and a few minor ones on the east coast; and Sātgāon, Srīpur, Chittāgong and Sonārgāon in Bengal. The customs duties, fixed by the State, were not very high; for example, at Surāt these were 3½ per cent on all imports and exports of goods, and 2 per cent on money either gold or silver. No merchant was allowed to "carry any quantity of silver" out of the country. The important feature of the trade of India from the reign of Akbar

was the commercial activity of the English and the Dutch, who gradually established factories in widely distributed centres. As the demand for the costly European goods was confined to the wealthy, the European merchants had to import bullion from home to purchase Indian commodities in spite of strong criticism in England against this practice. Moreland's contention that the European traders in India during the Mughul period had not "matters all their own way" is supported by numerous references in the factory records of the time. While they had to experience difficulty in dealing with Indian merchants and brokers, who were "generally subtle and clever", and with commercial monopolies, the chief obstacle in their way was the interference of the local governors and other high officers. As an instance, we may note the evidence of an English letter of 1659 to the effect that Mīr Jumla had caused the doors of the English factory at Cāssimbāzār to be closed, and had forbidden anybody to trade with the English, until they had paid him a formal visit. The European traders spared no pains to humour and satisfy these officers in a variety of ways; sometimes they could gain their objects and sometimes they were disillusioned.

K. Economic Deterioration after the Reign of Aurangzeb

With the closing years of the reign of Aurangzeb, the economic prosperity of India deteriorated as a natural sequel to the disappearance of peace and political order. The incessant wars of the reign, bankruptcy of the administration and exhaustion of the exchequer, made maintenance of peace and order impossible; and consequently agriculture, industries, and trade were so badly affected that for some time trade came almost to a standstill. During the years 1690–1698, the English could not procure sufficient cloths for their shipping. "Thus ensued," observes the historian of Aurangzeb, "a great economic impoverishment of India—not only a decrease of the 'national stock', but also a rapid lowering of mechanical skill and standard of civilisation, a disappearance of art and culture over wide tracts of the country." Though comparatively free from wars, Bengal was put to a great economic strain as the revenues of the *subah* financed the Deccan wars of Aurangzeb and were sorely tapped by the rapidly declining Mughul Empire.

The economic decline of the country began much earlier than 1757, but a number of causes accelerated it, especially in Bengal, during the eighteenth century, which is indeed the "darkest age" in the economic history of India. The weakness of the central

government, court revolutions and conspiracies, the terrible Persian inroad of 1738–1739, the ravages committed by the Marāthas, the Himālayan tribes, the Mugs and the Portuguese pirates, the abuse of *dastaks* and other trade privileges by the servants, agents and *gomastās* of the English Company in their *private trade*, the Company's monopoly of some of the articles of prime necessity like salt, betelnut and tobacco, the oppression of merchants and weavers for the sake of a rich return on the investments of the Company, the huge drain of wealth out of the country since 1757, the oppressive revenue-farming system, and currency disorders—all combined to bring about the economic ruin of the country. To add to these, the gradual supplanting of the Nawāb's government by the East India Company, and the consequent disbandment of armies and disestablishment of courts and native secretariats, threw many people out of employment, who joined the ranks of the professional robbers and criminal tribes, and produced general lawlessness and insecurity during the post-Plassey period. In May, 1765, the Select Committee beheld Bengal as a "presidency divided, headstrong and licentious, a government without nerves, a treasury without money, and service without subordination, discipline, or public spirit . . . amidst a general stagnation of useful industry and of licensed commerce, individuals were accumulating immense riches, which they had ravished from the insulted prince and helpless people, who groaned under the united pressure of discontent, poverty and oppression".[1] The dual government of Clive and his two inefficient successors, Verelst and Cartier, made confusion worse confounded, and the terrible famine of 1770 filled the cup of popular misery. After 1772, when the Company's government decided "to stand forth as the Diwān", attempts were made by Warren Hastings and Cornwallis to remove some of these evils, but many years more were to elapse before a new order could be brought into existence.

[1] Letter from the Select Committee in Bengal to the Court of Directors, dated 19th February, 1767. *Vide* Verelst, *View of Bengal*, Appendix, p. 471.

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATION, LITERATURE AND ART

1. Education and Literature

In Mughul India there was nothing like the modern system of education established and maintained by the State. But primary and secondary education of some sort existed. The rulers themselves, as well as many of the grandees, encouraged such education by grants of lands or money to mosques, monasteries and individual saints and scholars. Thus almost every mosque had a *maktab* attached to it, where the boys and girls of the neighbourhood received elementary education. Hindu Sanskritic and vernacular schools also continued to function for the benefit of students in the urban as well as rural areas.

The Mughul rulers of India were patrons of education. It is stated, on the authority of the *Tawārīkh* of Sayyid Maqbar 'Ālī, a minister of Bābur, that one of the duties of the Public Works Department (*Shuhrat-i-Ām*) of that ruler's time was the building of schools and colleges. Humāyūn, though indolent and addicted to opium, had a passion for study, his favourite subjects being geography and astronomy; and his fondness for books was so great that he always "carried a select library with him". He caused a *madrāsā* to be established at Delhi and changed the pleasure-house built by Sher Shāh in the *Purāna Qil'ā* into a library. "Akbar's reign marks a new epoch for the system introduced for imparting education in schools and colleges". He built colleges at Fathpur Sīkrī, Āgra and other places. With a view to improving the state of Muslim education, he effected certain changes in its curriculum, which it would be unreasonable to say produced no effect at all. As a matter of fact, Abul Fazl, referring to its good results, writes that "all nations have schools for the education of youths; but Hindustān is particularly famous for its seminaries". Prompted by his policy of religious toleration, Akbar arranged in later years for the education of Hindus in *madrāsās*. Jahāngīr, possessed of some literary taste and well-read in Persian as well as Turkī, issued a regulation to the effect that on the death of a

rich man or traveller without any heir, his property would escheat to the crown and be utilised for building and repairing *madrāsās*, monasteries, etc. It is recorded in the *Ta'rīkh-i-Jān-Jahān* that, soon after his accession to the throne, Jahāngīr "repaired even these *madrāsās* that had for thirty years been the dwelling-places of birds and beasts, and filled them with students and professors". Shāh Jahān, though more interested in magnificent buildings than in anything else, was educated in his early youth in Turkī, spent a part of the night in his own studies, and encouraged learning by granting rewards and stipends to scholars. He founded one college at Delhi and repaired the college named *Dār-ul-Baqā* (Abode of Eternity), which had been almost in ruins. In Dārā Shukoh the Mughul imperial family possessed one of the greatest scholars that India has ever produced. Well-versed in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit, he was the author of some famous works, including Persian translations of the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavat Gītā* and the *Yoga Vāśishṭha Rāmāyaṇa*; a calendar of Muslim saints; and several works on Sūfī philosophy. Looking at the grave of this unlucky person, Sir William Sleeman rightly thought that had he lived to occupy the throne, the nature of education, and therewith the destiny of India, would have been different. Aurangzeb, though highly educated, did nothing substantial to promote learning in general, though he extended every encouragement to Muslim education, and founded, according to Keene, "numerous colleges and schools".

Female education of some sort existed during the Mughul period. The daughters of the imperial household, and of rich nobles, were given tuition in their houses, and we may assume that the daughters of the middle-class people among the Hindus received primary education along with the boys in the schools and that some of them were conversant with religious literature. The Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission rightly observed in September, 1929, that there is "nothing inherent either in the Hindu or in the Muslim religion which militates against the education of women. In fact, there were in India even in early days many examples of women possessing wide knowledge, particularly of sacred and classical literature". In Akbar's time "regular training was given to the ladies of the royal household". Some of the ladies so instructed distinguished themselves in the sphere of literature. Thus Bābur's daughter, Gulbadan Begam, authoress of the *Humāyūnnāmāh*, Humāyūn's niece, Salimā Sultānā, authoress of several Persian poems, Nūr Jahān, Mumtāz Mahal, Jahānārā Begam and Zeb-un-Nisā were highly educated ladies, well-read

in Persian and Arabic literature. Besides being a fine Arabic and Persian scholar, Zeb-un-Nisā was an expert in calligraphy and had a rich library.

As we have already noted, the Tīmūrid rulers of India were patrons of literature and gave a considerable impetus to its development in different branches. Many scholars flourished and wrote interesting and important works under the patronage of Akbar. One of Akbar's contemporaries, Mādhavāchārya, a Bengali poet of Triveṇī and author of *Chandī-mangal*, bestows high praise on the Emperor as a patron of letters.

The Persian literature of Akbar's reign may be considered under three heads: (i) historical works, (ii) translations, and (iii) poetry and verse. The well-known historical works of the reign are the *Ta'rīkh-i-'Alfi* of Mullā Dāūd, the *'Āīn-i-Akbarī* and *Akbarnāmāh* of Abul Fazl, the *Muntakhab-ut-Tawārīkh* of Badāūnī, the *Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī* of Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, the *Akbarnāmāh* of Faizī Sarhindī, and the *Ma'āsir-i-Rahīmī* of 'Abdul Bāqī, compiled under the patronage of 'Abdur Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān. The most accomplished writer (in Persian) of the reign was Abul Fazl, a man of letters, a poet, an essayist, a critic, and a historian. By order of the Emperor, many books in Sanskrit and other languages were translated into Persian. Different sections of the *Mahābhārata* were translated into that language by several Muslim scholars and were compiled under the title of *Razm-Nāmāh*. After labouring for four years, Badāūnī completed the translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in A.D. 1589. Hājī Ibrāhīm Sarhindī translated into Persian the *Atharva Veda*; Faizī the *Lilābatī*, a work on mathematics; Mukammal Khān Gujarātī the *Tajak*, a treatise on astronomy; 'Abdur Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān the *Wāqiāt-i-Bāburī*; and Maulānā Shāh Muhammad Shāhābādī translated the *History of Kāshmīr*. Some Greek and Arabic works were also translated into Persian. A number of famous poets or versifiers produced works of merit under the patronage of Akbar. The most famous among the verse-writers was Ghizalī. Next in importance to him was Faizī, a brother of Abul Fazl. Other prominent poets were Muhammad Husain Nazirī of Nishāpur, who wrote *ghazals* of great merit, and Sayyid Jamāluddīn Urfi of Shirāj, the most famous writer of *Qasidās* in his days.

Jahāngīr, possessed of an excellent literary taste, also extended his patronage to scholars. His autobiography is second only to that of Bābur in matter and style. Among the learned men who adorned his court, of whom the *Iqbālnāmāh-i-Jahāngīrī* has given a comprehensive list, we may mention here the names of Ghiyās

Beg, Naqib Khān, Mu'tamid Khān, Niāmatullah and 'Abdul Haqq Dihlawī. Some historical works were written during Jahāngīr's reign, the most important of these being the *Ma'āsir-i-Jahāngīrī*, the *Iqbālnāmah-i-Jahāngīrī* and the *Zubd-ut-Tawārīkh*. Shāh Jahān followed his predecessors in patronising learned men. Besides many poets and theologians, there flourished in his court some famous writers of history like 'Abdul Hamīd Lāhorī, author of the *Pādshāh-nāmāh*, Amīnāī Qazwīnī, author of another *Pādshāhnāmāh*, Ināyat Khān, author of the *Shāh-Jahānnāmāh*, and Muhammad Sālih, author of *'Amal-i-Sālih*, all of whom are important authorities on the history of Shāh Jahān's reign. The scholarly works of Prince Dārā Shukoh, to which reference has already been made, are masterpieces of Persian literature. A zealous Sunnī, Aurangzeb was a critical scholar of Muslim theology and jurisprudence. He had no taste for poetry. Though opposed to the writing of histories of his reign, so that the *Muntakhab-ul-Lubāb* of Khāfī Khān had to be written in secrecy, there are some well-known works of this kind, such as the *'Ālamgīrnāmāh* by Mīrzā Muhammad Kāzim, the *Ma'āsir-i-'Ālamgīrī* of Muhammad Sāqī, the *Khulāsat-ut-Tawārīkh* of Sujan Rāi Khatri, the *Nushka-i-Dilkushā* of Bhīmsen and the *Fatūhāt-i-'Ālamgīrī* of Ishwar Dās.

The peace and order secured by Akbar, and the cosmopolitan ideas of the religious movements of the period, preached by a band of saintly teachers in a language "understanded of the people", stimulated the genius of the latter, which unfolded itself in manifold petals. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries consequently became "the Augustan age of Hindustani literature". The first writer of note after 1526 was Malik Muhammad Jayasī, who in 1540 wrote "the fine philosophic epic entitled the *Padmāvat*, which gives the story of Padminī, the queen of Mewār, in an allegorical setting". Akbar's keen interest in, and patronage of, Hindī poetry gave a great stimulus to Hindī literature. Among the courtiers of the Emperor, Bīrbal, who received from him the title of Kavi Priya, was a famous poet. Rājā Mān Singh also wrote verses in Hindī and was a patron of learning. The most distinguished writer among Akbar's ministers was 'Abdur Rahīm Khān-i-Khānān, whose *dohās* are even now read with interest and admiration all over Northern India. Narahari, whom the Emperor gave the title of Mahāpātra, Harināth and Ganj were also noted writers of his court.

The greater part of the poetical literature of the time was religious, marked by an exposition of either Kṛishṇa worship or the Rāma cult. Many writers of the former faith flourished in the Brajabhūmi, corresponding roughly to the Jumnā valley, where

it developed remarkably. Among the eight disciples of Vallabhāchārya and his son Bithal Nāth, grouped under the name of "*Astachāp*", the most notable was Surdās, "the blind bard of Āgra", who, writing in *Brajabhāshā*, described in his *Sursāgar* the sports of Krishṇa's early life, and composed many verses on the charm of Krishṇa and his beloved Rādhā. The other important poets of this school were Nand Dās, author of the *Rās-panchadhyāyī*, Vithal Nāth, author of the *Chaurāsī Vaishnava ki vārtā* in prose, Paramānanda Dās, Kumbhan Dās, and Ras Khān (a Muslim disciple of Viṭhal Nāth), author of *Premavārtikā*. Among the writers of the Rāma cult, the most illustrious was Tulsī Dās (A.D. 1532–1623), who lived in Benares "unapproachable and alone in his niche in the temple of Fame". He was not merely a poet of a high order, but a spiritual *teacher* of the people of Hindustān, where his name has become a household word and his memory is worshipped by millions. The most famous of his works, known as *Rāmcharitamānasa*, or "The Pool of Rāma's Life", has been justly described by Sir George Grierson as "the one Bible of a hundred millions of people" of Hindustān. Growse also observed in his translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Tulsī Dās that "his book is in every one's hands, from the court to the cottage, and is read and heard and appreciated alike by every class of the Hindu community, whether high or low, rich or poor, young or old". This period was also marked by "the first attempts to systematise the art of poetry itself", made by writers like Keshava Dās (A.D. 1580), a Sāndhya Brāhmaṇa of Orchā, Sundar Senāpati and the Tripāthī brothers, who flourished during the reign of Shāh Jahān.

In Bengal, this period was remarkable for a brilliant outburst of the Vaishṇava literature. Its various branches, such as the *Karchās* or notes, the *padas* and songs, and the biographies of Chaitanya Deva, have not only saturated the minds of the people of Bengal with feelings of love and liberalism, but have also survived as a mirror of the social life of the province during that age. The most prominent Vaishṇava writers were Krishṇadās Kavirāj (born in A.D. 1517 of a Vaidya family of Jhāmālpur in Burdwān), the author of the most important biography of Chaitanya, bearing the title of *Chaitanyacharitāmitra*; Brindāvan Dās (born in A.D. 1507), the author of *Chaitanya Bhāgavata*, which besides being a standard work on the life of Chaitanya Deva, is a store-house of information concerning the Bengali society of his time; Jayānanda (born in A.D. 1513), the author of *Chaitanya Mangal*, a biographical work giving some fresh information about Chaitanya Deva's life; Trilochan Dās (born in A.D. 1523 at Kowgrām, a village situated

thirty miles to the north of Burdwān), the author of a very popular biography of Chaitanya Deva also known as *Chaitanya Mangal*; and Narahari Chakravarty, the author of *Bhaktiratnākar*, a voluminous biography of Chaitanya Deva, written in fifteen chapters and considered to be next in importance only to the work of Kṛishṇadās Kavirāj. This period also saw the production of numerous translations of the great epics and the *Bhāgavata*, and books in praise of Chandī Devī and Manasā Devī. The most important of these works were the *Mahābhārata* of Kāsīrām Dās and the *Kavikankan Chandī* of Mukundarām Chakravarti, which enjoys to this day as much popularity in Bengal as the famous book of Tulsī Das in upper India. Mukundarām's work depicts a graphic picture of the social and economic conditions of the people of Bengal of his time, and it is for this that Prof. Cowell has described him as "the Crabbe of Bengal", and Dr. Grierson considers his poetry "as coming from the heart, and not from the school, and as full of passages adorned with true poetry and descriptive power".

The Emperors' fondness for books led to the foundation of libraries, which were stocked with numerous valuable manuscript works. Akbar's library had enormous collections, which were properly classified under different sections. The art of calligraphy reached a high state of excellence. Among the famous penmen of Akbar's court, of whom the *'Āīn-i-Akbarī* has preserved a list, the most distinguished was Muhammad Husain of Kāshmīr, who got the title of *Zarrinqalam* (Gold-pen).

The growth of Hindī literature received a setback during the reign of Aurangzeb, owing to the stoppage of court patronage. Not much Urdu poetry also was written in Northern India during this period; but some famous writers of Urdu verse flourished in the Deccan.

Literary activity did not entirely cease even in the troubled days of later Mughul rule. Men of letters were patronised by Emperors like Bahādur Shāh and Muhammad Shāh, *subahdārs* like Murshid Qulī Jāfar Khān and 'Ālīvardī Khān, and zamindārs like Rājā Kṛishṇachandra of Nadiā, Asadullāh of Bīrbhūm and some others. The literature of this period, with the exception of the devotional songs of Rāmprasād, was often of a low tone and a vitiated taste. Female education, both among the Hindus and the Muslims, was not unknown to the age. The two daughters of Jan Muhammad, a converted Hindu and father of the well-known Kokī Jiu, were "sent to school and attained some proficiency in letters". Kokī Jiu "excelled her brothers in handwriting and composition". In

Bengal, we find several instances of educated ladies; for example, the wives of Rājā Navskṛishṇa of Sobhābāzār (in Calcutta) were famous for their capacity to read, and Ānandamayī of East Bengal was a poetess of no mean repute.

2. Art and Architecture

A. Architecture

As in literature and religion, so in art and architecture, the Mughul period was not entirely an age of innovation and renaissance, but of a continuation and culmination of processes that had their beginnings in the later Turko-Afghān period. In fact, the art and architecture of the period after 1526, as also of the preceding period, represent a happy mingling of Muslim and Hindu art traditions and elements.

With the exception of Aurangzeb, whose puritanism could not reconcile itself with patronage of art, all the early Mughul rulers of India were great builders. Brief though his Indian reign was, Bābur could make time to criticise in his *Memoirs* the art of building in Hindustān and think of constructing edifices. He is said to have invited from Constantinople pupils of the famous Albanian architect, Sinān, to work on mosques and other monuments in India. "It is, however, very unlikely," remarks Mr. Percy Brown, "that this proposal ever came to anything, because had any member of this famous school taken service under the Mughuls, traces of the influence of the Byzantine style would be observable. But there is none. . . ." Bābur employed Indian stone-masons to construct his buildings. He himself states in his *Memoirs* that "680 men worked daily on his buildings at Āgra, and that nearly 1,500 were employed daily on his buildings at Sīkrī, Biyāna, Dholpur, Gwālior and Kiul". The larger edifices of Bābur have entirely disappeared. Three minor ones have survived, one of which is a commemorative mosque in the Kābulī Bāg at Pānīpat (1526), another the *Jāmi' Masjid* at Sambhal (1526) in Rohilkhand, and the third a mosque within the old Lodī fort at Āgra. Of the reign of the unlucky emperor Humāyūn, only two structures remain in a semi-dilapidated condition, one mosque at Āgra, and the other a massive well-proportioned mosque at Fathbād in the Hissār district of the Punjab, built about A.D. 1540 with enamelled tile decoration in the Persian manner. It should be noted here that this "Persian" or rather "Mongol" trait was not brought to India for the first time by Humāyūn, but had already been present in

the Bahmanī kingdom in the later half of the fifteenth century. The short reign of the Indo-Afghān revivalist Sher Shāh is a period of transition in the history of Indian architecture. The two remaining gateways of his projected walled capital at Delhi, which could not be completed owing to his untimely death, and the citadel known as the *Purāna Qil'ā*, exhibit "a more refined and artistically ornate type of edifice than had prevailed for some time". The mosque called the *Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid*, built in 1545 within the walls, deserves a high place among the buildings of Northern



SHER SHĀH'S MAUSOLEUM, SASARĀM

India for its brilliant architectural qualities. Sher Shāh's mausoleum, built on a high plinth in the midst of a lake at Sasarām in the Shāhābād district of Bihār, is a marvel of Indo-Moslem architecture, both from the standpoint of design and dignity, and shows a happy combination of Hindu and Muslim architectural ideas. Thus not only in government, but also in culture and art, the great Afghān prepared the way for the great Mughul, Akbar.

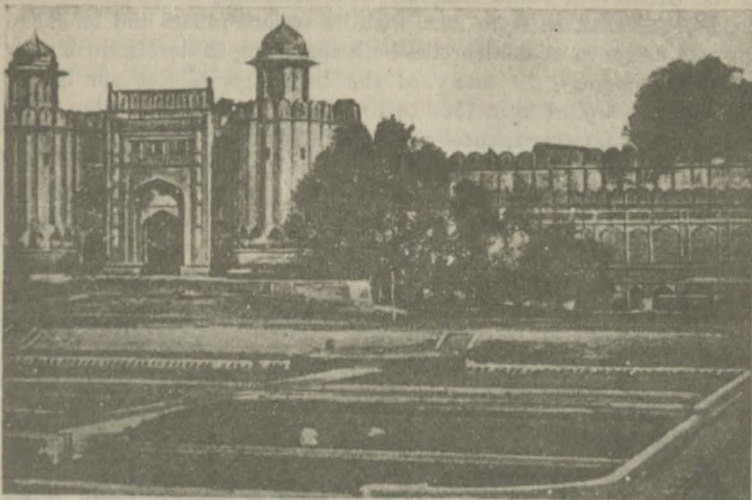
Akbar's reign saw a remarkable development of architecture. With his usual thoroughness, the Emperor mastered every detail of the art; and, with a liberal and synthetic mind he supplied himself with artistic ideas from different sources, which were

given a practical shape by the expert craftsmen he gathered around him. Abul Fazl justly observes that his sovereign "planned splendid edifices and dressed the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay". Fergusson aptly remarked that Fathpur Sīkrī "was a reflex of the mind of a great man". Akbar's activities were not confined only to the great

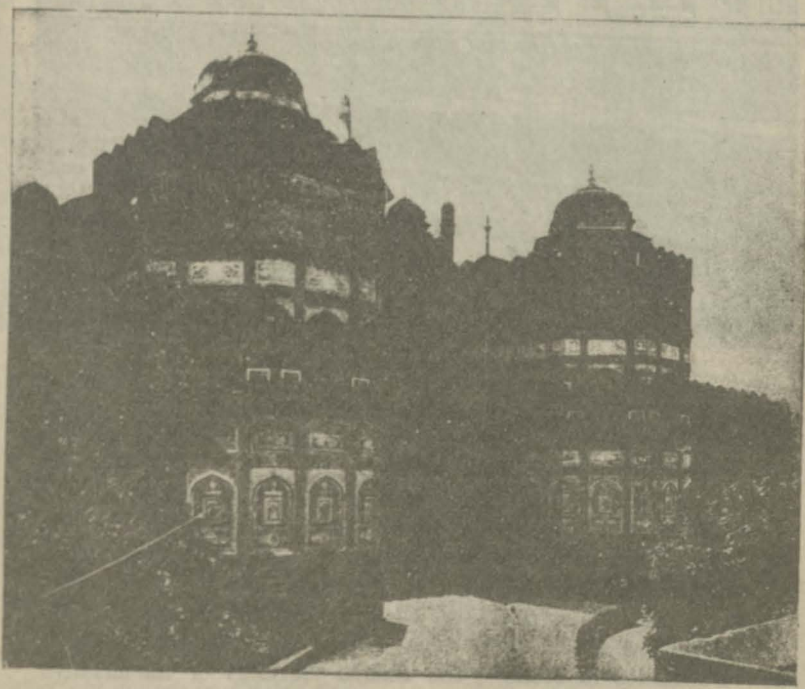


CARVED PILLARS IN SULTĀNA'S HOUSE, FATHPUR SĪKRĪ

masterpieces of architecture; but he also built a number of forts, villas, towers, *sarāis*, schools, tanks and wells. While still adhering to Persian ideas, which he inherited from his mother, born of a Persian Shaikh family of Jām, his tolerance of the Hindus, sympathy with their culture, and the policy of winning them over to his cause, led him to use Hindu styles of architecture in many of his buildings, the decorative features of which are copies of those found

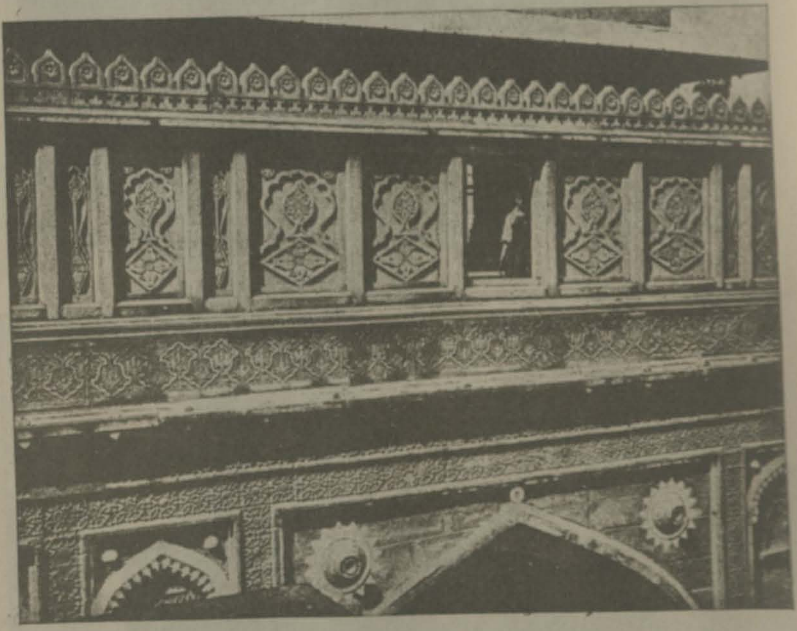


LAHORE FORT



DELHI GATE, ÂGRA FORT

in the Hindu and Jaina temples. It is strikingly illustrated in the *Jahāngīrī Mahal*, in Āgra fort, with its square pillars and bracket-capitals, and rows of small arches built according to the Hindu design without voussoirs; in many of the buildings of Fathpur Sīkrī, the imperial capital from 1569 to 1584; and also in the Lahore fort. Even in the famous mausoleum of Humāyūn at Old Delhi, completed early in A.D. 1569, which is usually considered to have displayed influences of Persian art, the ground-plan of the tomb is Indian, the free use of white marble in the outward appearance of



JAHĀNGĪRĪ MAHAL, ĀGRA FORT

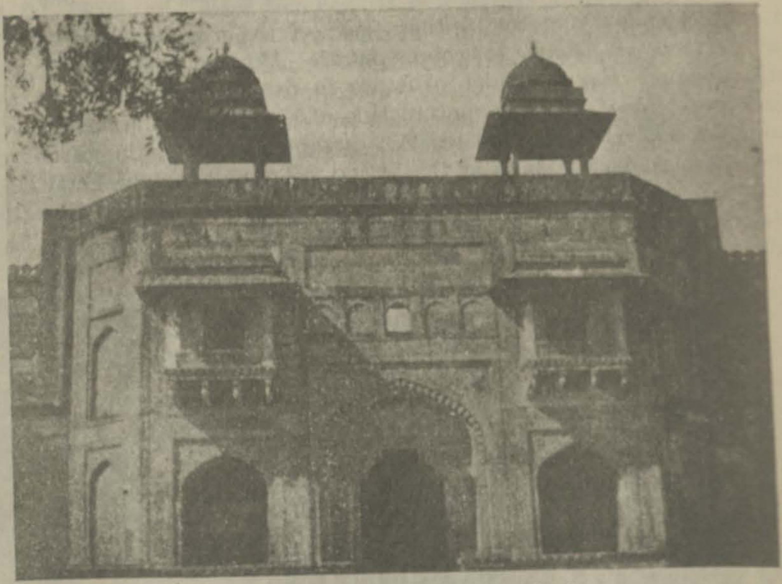
the edifice is Indian, and the coloured tile decoration, used so much by Persian builders, is absent. The most magnificent of the Emperor's buildings at Fathpur Sīkrī are Jodh Bāī's palace and two other residential buildings, said to have been constructed to accommodate his queens; the *Diwān-i-'Am* or the Emperor's office, of Hindu design with a projecting veranda roof over a colonnade; the wonderful *Diwān-i-Khās* or Hall of private audience, of distinctly Indian character in planning, construction and ornament; the marble mosque known as the *Jāmi' Masjid*, described by Fergusson as "a romance in stone"; the *Buland Darwāza* or the massive

triumphal archway at the southern gate of the mosque, built of marble and sandstone to commemorate Akbar's conquest of Gujarāt; and the pyramidal structure in five storeys known as the *Panch Mahal*, showing continuation of the plan of the Indian Buddhist *vihāras* which still exist in certain parts of India. Two other remarkable buildings of the period are the Palace of Forty Pillars at Allahābād and Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandara. The palace at Allahābād, the construction of which, according to William Finch, took forty years and engaged 5,000 to 20,000



TOMB OF HUMĀYŪN, DELHI

workmen of different denominations, is of a definitely Indian design with its projecting veranda-roof "supported on rows of Hindu pillars". The côlossal structure of Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandara, planned in the Emperor's lifetime but executed between A.D. 1605 and 1613, consists of five terraces diminishing as they ascend with a vaulted roof to the topmost storey of white marble, and it is thought that a central dome was originally intended to be built over the cenotaph. The Indian design in this structure was inspired by the Buddhist *viharās* of India and also probably by Khmer architecture found in Cochin-China.



JODH BĀĪ'S PALACE, FATHPUR SĪKRĪ



AKBAR'S MAUSOLEUM, SIKANDARA

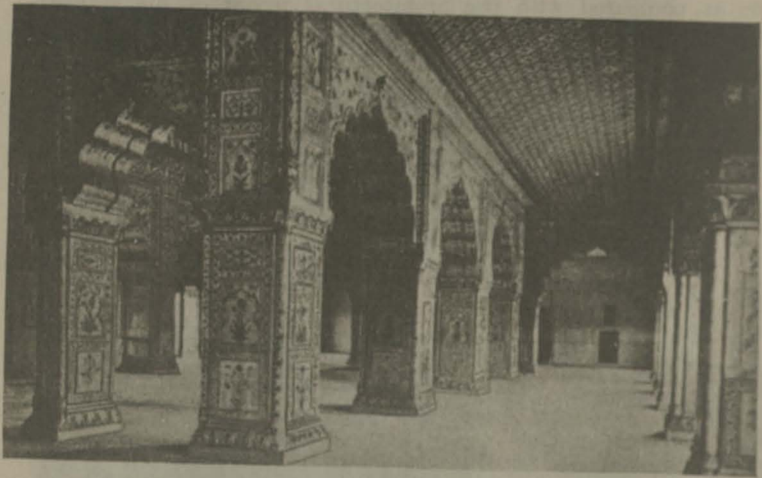
The number of buildings erected during Jahāngīr's reign was poor as compared with the architectural record of his father, but two structures of his time are of exceptional interest and merit. One is the mausoleum of Akbar, whose striking features have been already discussed. The other is the tomb of I'timād-ud-daulah at Āgra built by his daughter, Nūr Jahān, the consort of Jahāngīr. The latter was built wholly of white marble decorated with *pietra dura* work in semi-precious stones. We have an earlier specimen of this work in the *Gol Mandal* temple at Udaipur (from



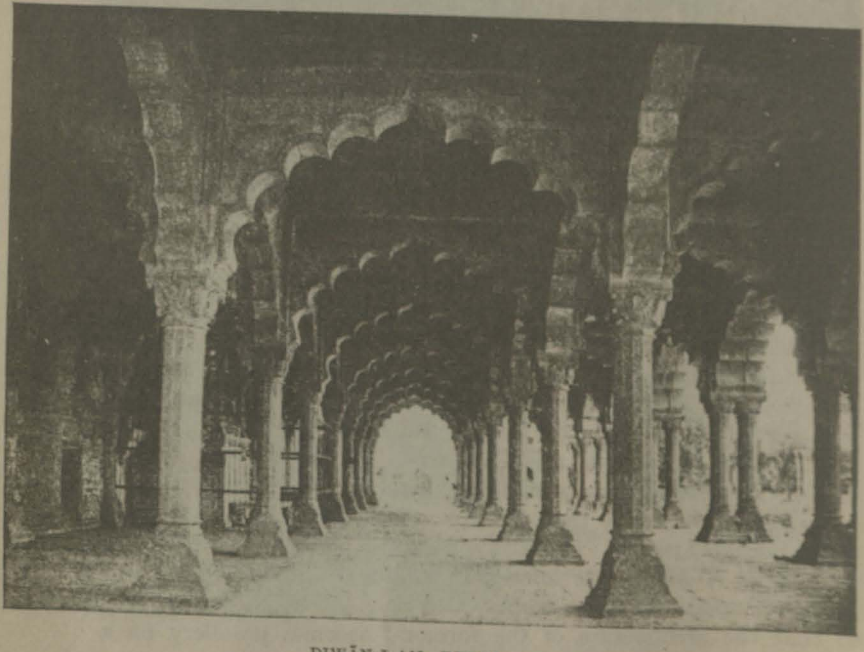
GOL MANDAL OR MAHAL, JAGMANDIR, UDAIPUR

A.D. 1600). It was therefore a Rājput style, or, most probably, an older Indian style.

Shāh Jahān was a prolific builder. Many buildings, palaces, forts, gardens and mosques due to him are to be found at places like Āgra, Delhi, Lahore, Kābul, Kāshmīr, Qandahār, Ajmer, Ahmadābād, Mukhlispur, and elsewhere. Though it is not possible to form a precise estimate of the expenditure on these buildings, yet there is no doubt that the cost must have run into several dozen crores of rupees. The structures of Shāh Jahān, as compared with those of Akbar, are inferior in grandeur and originality, but they are superior in lavish display and rich and skilful decoration, so that the architecture of the former "becomes jewellery on a



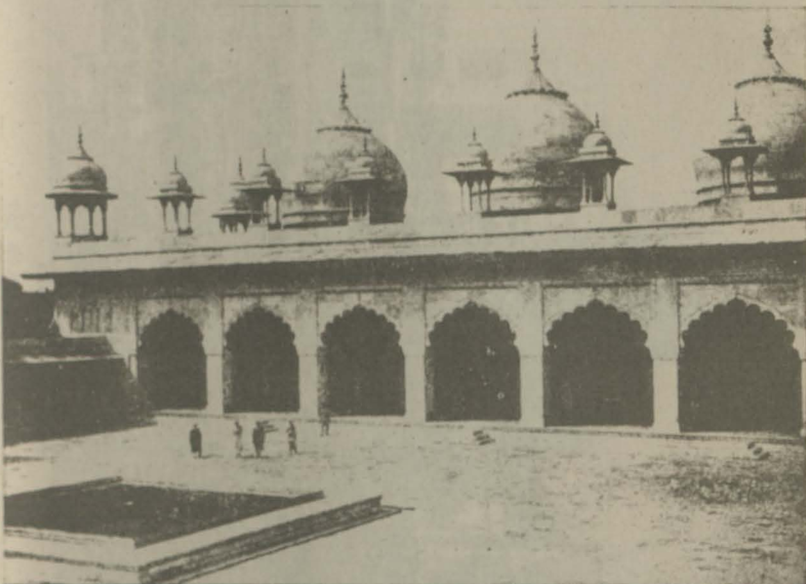
DIWĀN-I-KHĀS, DELHI



DIWĀN-I-AM, DELHI

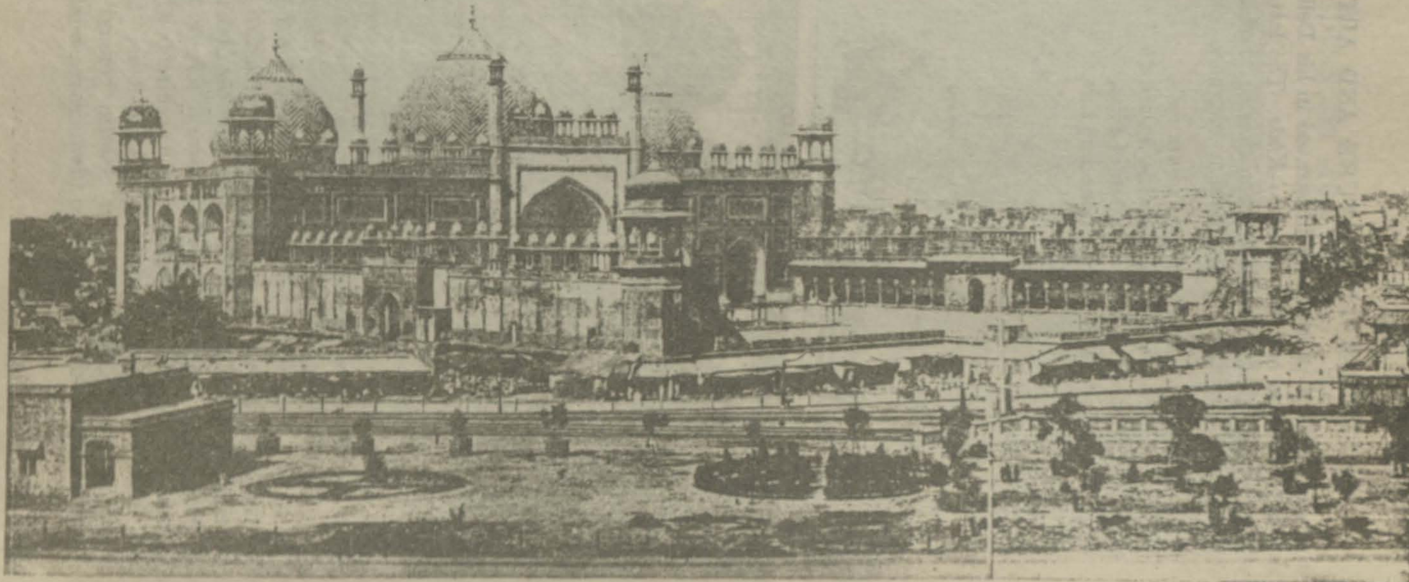
bigger scale". This is particularly illustrated in his Delhi buildings like the *Diwān-i-'Am* and the *Diwān-i-Khās*. The latter, with its costly silver ceiling, and mingled decoration of marble, gold and precious stones, justified the inscription engraved on it:

> "*Agar firdaus bar ru-yi zamin ast*
> *Hamin ast, u hamin ast, u hamin ast.*"
> (If on Earth be an Eden of bliss,
> It is this, it is this, none but this.)

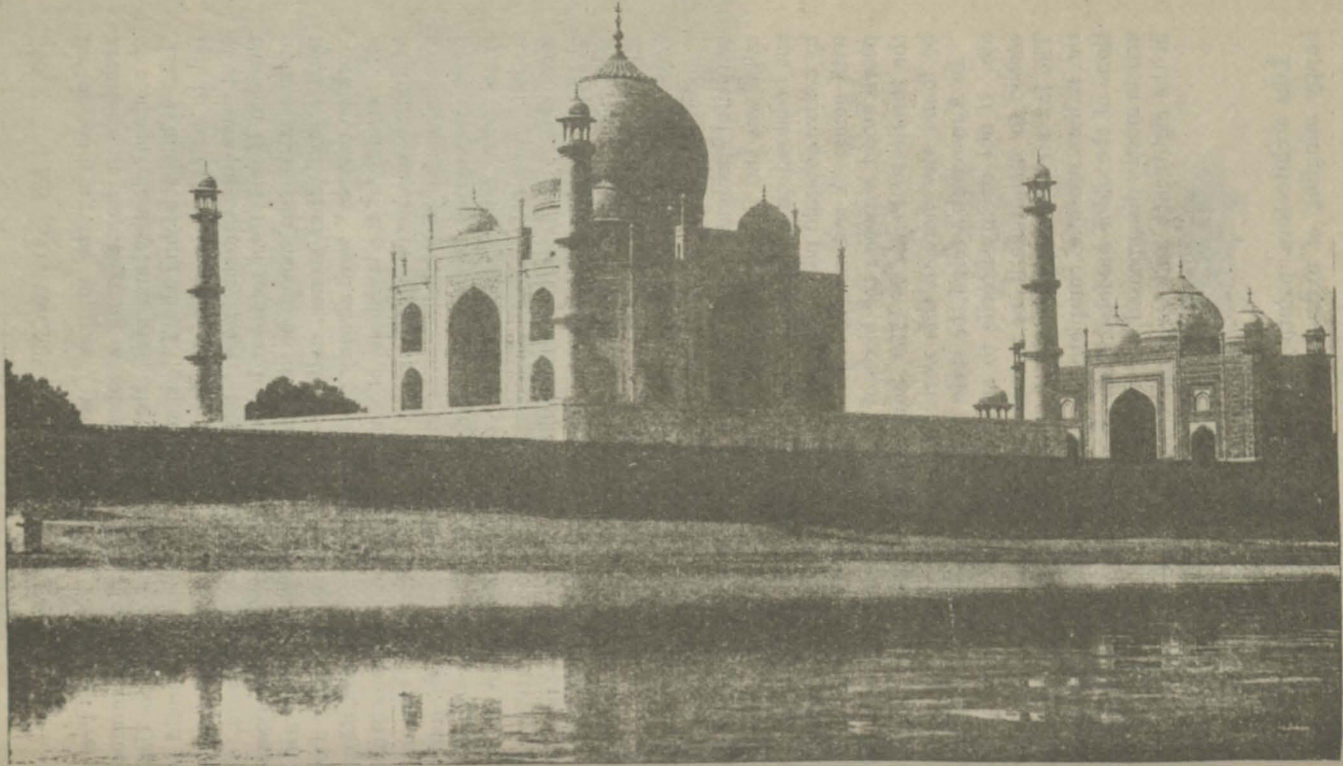


MOTI MASJID AT ĀGRA

The lovely *Moti Masjid* or Pearl Mosque at Āgra deserves a higher place from the standpoint of true art for its purity and elegance. Another notable building of the reign is the *Jāmi' Masjid* at Āgra, otherwise known as the *Masjid-i-Jahān Nāmā*. The *Tāj Mahal*, a splendid mausoleum built by Shāh Jahān, at a cost of fifty lacs of rupees, over the grave of his beloved wife, Mumtāz Mahal, is rightly regarded as one of the wonders of the world for its beauty and magnificence. As regards the identity of the architects who designed and built the Tāj, Smith's contention that it is "the product of a combination of European and Asiatic genius" has been challenged by Moin-ud-dīn Ahmad, who advances reasonable grounds



JĀMI' MASJID, ĀGRA



TĀJ MAHAL, ĀGRA

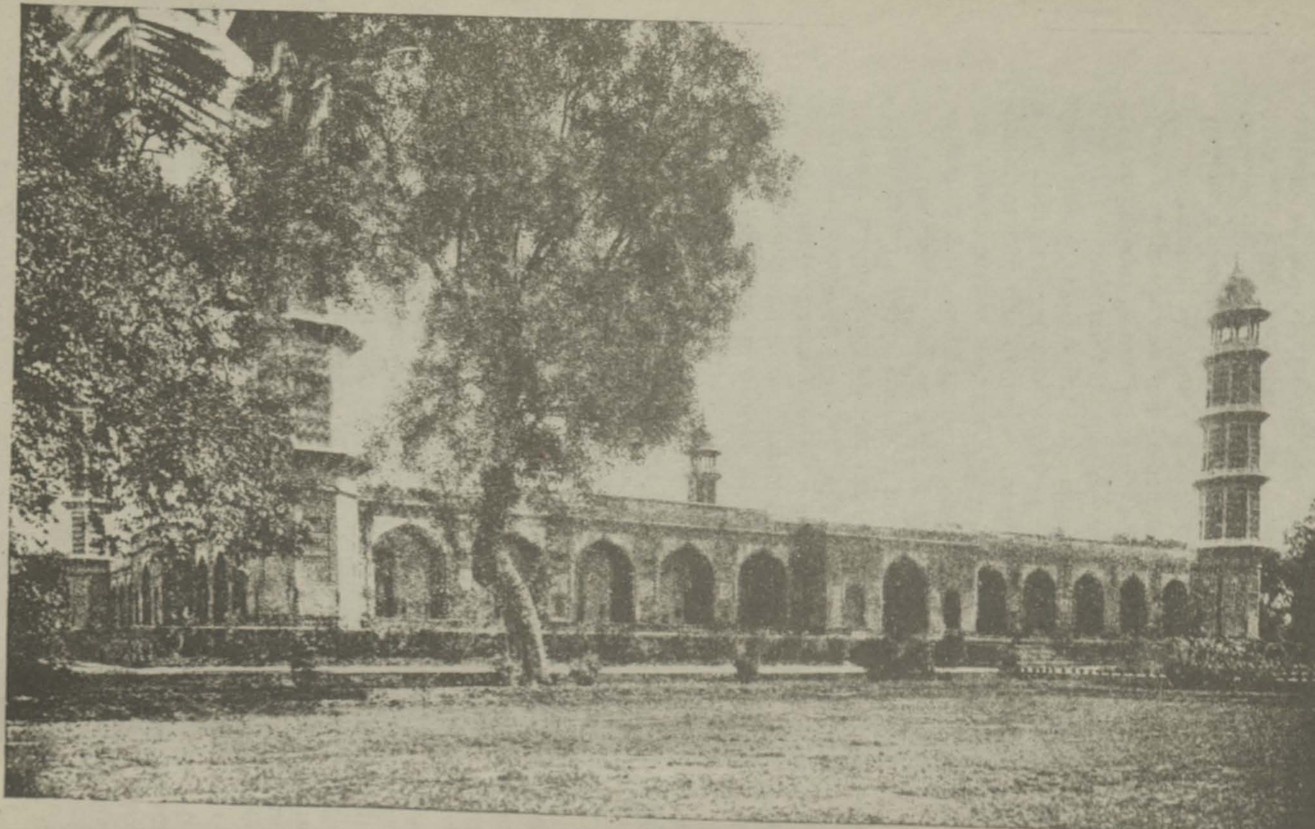
for disbelieving the supposed participation of Italian or French architects in the designing or construction of this noble monument of conjugal fidelity and gives the credit for the design to Ustād 'Īsā. While studying the Tāj, a student of Indian art should not fail to note certain points. Firstly, the plan and chief features of it were not entirely novel, for "from Sher's mausoleum, and through Humāyūn's tomb and the Bijāpur memorials, the descent of the style can easily be discerned"; even the "lace-work in marble and other stones, and precious stones inlay (*pietra dura*) work on marble" were already present in Western India and Rājput art. Secondly, "the lavish use of white marble and some decorations of Indian character" lead us to think that there is no reason to overemphasise the domination of Persian influence in Shāh Jahān's buildings as is usually done. Thirdly, considering the intercourse of India with the Western world, particularly the Mediterranean region, during the Mughul period, it would not be historically inconsistent to believe in the influence of some elements of art of the Western world on the art of India during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and also in the presence of some European builders in different parts of contemporary India.

Though not so famous as the Tāj, the mausoleum of Jahāngīr, built by Shāh Jahān at an early date at Shāhdara in Lahore, is a beautiful specimen of art. Another celebrated work of art of this reign was the Peacock Throne. "The throne was in the form of a cot bedstead on golden legs. The enamelled canopy was supported by twelve emerald pillars, each of which bore two peacocks encrusted with gems. A tree covered with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and pearls stood between the birds of each pair." Nādir Shāh removed the throne to Persia in 1739, but unfortunately it is no longer to be found anywhere in this world.

In Aurangzeb's reign the style of architecture began to deteriorate. If not openly hostile to architecture, the puritanic Emperor ceased to encourage it, or to erect buildings, like his predecessors. The few structures of his reign, the most important of which was the Lahore mosque, completed in A.D. 1674, were but feeble imitations of the older models. Soon the creative genius of the Indian artists mostly disappeared, surviving partly in Oudh and Hyderābād in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

B. Painting

Like architecture, painting in the Mughul period represented a happy mingling of extra-Indian as well as Indian elements. A



THE MAUSOLEUM OF JAHĀNGĪR AT SHĀHDARA, LAHORE

provincialised form of Chinese art, which was a mixture of Indian Buddhist, Iranian, Bactrian and Mongolian influences, was introduced into Persia in the thirteenth century by its Mongol conquerors and was continued by their Tīmūrīd successors, who again imported it into India. The characteristics of this Indo-Sino-Persian art were assimilated, mingled and combined, in the time of Akbar, in products of the contemporary Indian schools of painting, which flourished, as a renaissance of earlier Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina styles, in different parts of the country, such as Gujarāt, Rājputāna, Vijayanagar, Bijāpur, Ahmadnagar and some other places, and led to the development of a style of painting in which the Mongoloid elements gradually declined and the Indian ones predominated. This modification can be clearly seen in the paintings in the copies of the *Khāndān-i-Tīmūriā* and the *Pādshāhnāmāh*, both of which are preserved in the Khudābakhsh Library of Patna.

It is possible that Bābur, who was "always keenly observant of the beauties of Nature", patronised the art of painting, like his Tīmūrīd ancestors, according to his limited resources. The paintings in the Alwar MS. of the Persian version of his *Memoirs* probably represent the style that grew up in his time. Humāyūn, who, like other Tīmūrīds, possessed a taste for art, spent his hours of exile in Persia in studying Sino-Persian music, poetry and painting and came in contact with the leading artists of Persia, who flourished under the generous patronage of Shāh Tahmāsp. Two of them—Mīr Sayyid 'Ālī, a pupil of the famous Bihzād of Herāt, who has been styled "the Raphael of the East", and Khwāja 'Abdus Samād—were persuaded to come to his court at Kābul in A.D. 1550. Humāyūn and his son Akbar took lessons from them in the art of painting and engaged them in the task of preparing the illustrations to the *Dāstān-i-Amīr Hamzah*. These two foreign artists, working with their Indian assistants, "formed the nucleus of the Mughul school of painting", which became so prominent in the time of Akbar. This passed on as a valuable gift from Humāyūn to Akbar, while his political legacy was precarious.

In the illustrative paintings to *Amīr Hamzah*, done by Sayyid 'Ālī and 'Abdus Samād between A.D. 1550 and A.D. 1560, the Sino-Persian influence was still predominant. But in 1562, when the famous painting showing the arrival at the Mughul Court of the Vaishṇava musician, Tānsen, was executed, the fusion of Hindu and Sino-Persian styles began to manifest itself. From A.D. 1569 to 1585 the walls of Akbar's new capital at Fathpur Sīkrī were embellished with the masterpieces of the painter's art by the joint labours of the artists of the Hindu and Persian schools, both being

ready to imbibe and utilise new ideas and thus facilitating the growth of a new school of art. The Persian or other foreign artists in Akbar's court were few in number, the most famous of them being 'Abdus Samad, Farrukh Beg, who was of Kalmuck origin, Khursau Qulī and Jamshed. The Hindu artists predominated in number. Of the seventeen leading artists of Akbar's reign, no less than thirteen were Hindus. Abul Fazl thus refers to the standard of their art: "More than a hundred painters have become famous masters of the art, while the number of those who attain perfection, or of those who are middling, is very large. This is specially true of the Hindus, their pictures surpass our conception of things. Few indeed in the whole world are found equal to them." They worked in collaboration and excelled in portraiture, book-illustration and illumination and animal painting. Chief among them were Basawān, Lāl, Kesu, Mukund, Haribans and Daswanth. The last-named belonged to the Kāhār or palanquin-bearer caste, while the rest belonged to the Kāyastha, Chitera, Silāvat and Khatri castes and were drawn from different parts of the country.

Akbar, who shared with others of his race "an intense appreciation of the wonder and glory of the world", encouraged pictorial art in every possible way and gave it a religious outlook in spite of the Islamic injunction regarding the representation of living forms. "It appears to me," said he, "as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognising God; for if a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising its limbs, one after the other, comes to feel that he cannot bestow individuality on his work, he is forced to think of God, the Giver of life, and will thus increase his knowledge." In this way he sought to remove the discontent of the orthodox Muslims, who were opposed to the art of painting. "Bigoted followers of the letter of the law," writes Abul Fazl, "are hostile to the art of painting, but their eyes now see the truth."

The school of art that grew up under Akbar continued to flourish in the reign of Jahāngīr through the enthusiastic support and patronage of the latter. Jahāngīr was an excellent connoisseur, who paid high prices for any pictures that satisfied his aesthetic taste, and an art critic who could tell the names of individual artists in a composite piece. The famous Muslim artists of his court were Āgā Rezā and his son, Abul Hasan, of Herāt; Muhammad Nādir and Muhammad Murād from Samarqānd, who were among the last foreign artists to come to India; and Ustād Mansūr. Among the Hindu painters of this reign, Bishan Dās, Manohar and Govardhan were the most eminent. Himself having a fair acquaintance with

the classical aspects of miniature painting, the Emperor frequently purchased examples of the best schools of art in India or abroad; and his zeal, combined with the skill of his artists, led to the emancipation of Mughul pictorial art from the tutelage of Persian influences and to the development of an art style essentially Indian.

With Jahāngīr, however, according to Percy Brown, the real spirit of Mughul pictorial art declined. Shāh Jahān did not possess the same passion for painting as his father, and his tastes were more for architecture and jewellery. The court portraiture and *darbār* pictures of his reign were characterised by rich pigments and a lavish use of gold rather than by the harmonious blend of colours which was present in Jahāngīr's art. He reduced the number of court painters, and the art of painting was soon deprived of imperial patronage. In the imperial family only Dārā Shukoh was a patron of art, as is proved by his album now preserved in the India Office, and his untimely death was a great blow to art as well as to the Empire. The artists were compelled to seek employment under nobles, as in Rājputāna and the Himālayan states, set up studios in the *bāzārs* and sell their pictures, as a means of livelihood, to the general public, whose number was, however, limited. Bernier noted that the artists had no chance of attaining distinction and worked under adverse circumstances and for poor remuneration.

The reign of Aurangzeb saw a distinct decline of pictorial art, as the Emperor regarded its patronage as opposed to the precepts of sacred law. Large numbers of portraits of him in various situations were indeed drawn, with or without his consent, and he is said to have inspected at intervals the portrait of his rebellious son Muhammad Sultān, painted by his order, to know his condition in prison. But he is reported to have defaced the paintings in the Asār Mahal at Bijāpur, and Manucci writes that under his orders the figures in Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandara were whitewashed. With the disintegration of the Mughul Empire after the death of Aurangzeb, some of the surviving painters migrated from the capital to the states of Oudh, Hyderābād, Mysore and Bengal, which had made themselves practically independent, and some went to Lucknow and Patna. But both the support that they got and the work that they executed were far inferior to what had been the case under the Great Mughuls.

In the eighteenth century a style of painting noted for brilliancy and decorative effect flourished in Rājputāna, particularly in Jaipur. In the latter half of the century, highly beautiful and refined pictures were painted by the Kāngrā school, of which the Tehrī-Garhwāl school was an offshoot; and in the early nineteenth

century this developed into Sikh portrait painting. Recently, artists both in India and Europe have begun to appreciate Mughul and Rājput paintings and are trying to revive the style.

C. Music

Indian rulers like the 'Ādil Shāhī Sultāns of Bijāpur and Bāz Bahādur of Mālwa, a contemporary of Akbar, and all the Great Mughuls, with the exception of Aurangzeb, appreciated the art of music. Akbar, Jahāngīr, and Shāh Jahān extended considerable patronage to it, which led to the improvement of its quality and to its being widely cultivated. According to Abul Fazl, thirty-six singers enjoyed the patronage of Akbar's court. Of them, the most famous were Tānsen, about whom Abul Fazl writes that "a singer like him has not been in India for the last thousand years"; and Bāz Bahādur of Mālwa, who was employed in the service of Akbar, and has been described as "the most accomplished man of his day in the science of music and in Hindi song". Aurangzeb positively discouraged music and placed a ban upon it.

THE SO-CALLED SLAVE DYNASTY, 1206–90

I. Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak, d. 1210
(Slave of Mu'iz-ud-dīn Muhammad Ghūrī)

- II. Ārām (adopted?) d. 1211
- Daughter = III. Ilbarī Turk Shams-ud-dīn Iltutmish (Slave) d. May 1, 1236.
  - Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd (Bengal.)
  - IV. Rukn-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh, deposed and killed Nov. 1236.
    - VII. 'Alā-ud-dīn Ma'sūd, deposed June 1246.
  - V. (Daughter) Raziyya, deposed May 1240 d. Oct. 1240
  - VI. Mu'iz-ud-dīn Bahrām. d. May 15, 1242
  - VIII. Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd. d. Feb. 1266
    - Daughter = Prince Muhammad
      - X. Mu'iz-ud-dīn, Kaiqubād, killed 1290.
        - XI. Kayūmars.
  - ? Daughter = (Slave) IX. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban. d. 1287.
    - Prince Muhammad
    - Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd Bughrā Khān (Bengal)

THE KHALJĪ SULTĀNS OF DELHI, 1290–1320

Qaim Khān (Tūlak Khān of Qunduz)

- Khaljīs of Mālwa.
- I. Jalāl-ud-dīn, Fīrūz Shāh, d. July 21, 1296.
  - II. Rukn-ud-dīn, Ibrāhīm, deposed Nov. 1296.
- Masūd (Shihāb-ud-dīn).
  - III. 'Alā-ud-dīn Sikandar Sāni, Muhammad Shāh. d. Jan. 1316.
    - Prince Khizr Khān.
    - IV. Shihāb-ud-dīn 'Umar. d. April, 1316.
    - V. Qutb-ud-dīn Mubārak. d.c. April, 1320.
      - VI. Nāsir-ud-dīn Khusrav (usurper). d.c. Sept. 1320.

THE HOUSE OF TUGHLUQ, 1320–1413

- I. (Turkī Slave of Balban) Ghiyās-ud-dīn (Ghāzī Malik) Tughluq Shāh I. d. Feb. 1325.
  - II. Muhammad, Jauna d. March 20, 1351.
- Rajab = Bhatti Princess Sipāh Sālār.
  - III. Fīrūz Shāh, d. Sept. 20, 1388.
    - Fath Khān
      - IV. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq (II) deposed and killed 1389
      - VIII. Nusrat Shāh, disputed succession. Set up in Jan. 1395; d. 1398 or 1399
    - Zāfar Khān
      - V. Abu Baqr, deposed Dec. 1390
    - VI. Nāsir-ud-dīn, Muhammad Shāh d. Jan. 20, 1394.
      - VII. Alā-ud-dīn Sikandar (Humāyūn Khān), d. March 8, 1394.
      - IX. Mahmūd Shāh d. Feb. 1413.

THE SAYYID RULERS OF DELHI, 1414–1451

I. Khizr Khān
May 28, 1414; d. May 20, 1421.

- II. Mu'iz-ud-dīn, Mubārak. Killed 1434
- Farid Khān
  - III. Muhammad Shāh d. 1445.
    - IV. 'Alā-ud-dīn, 'Ālam Shāh d. 1453. (Removed to Badāūn, 1451).

THE LODĪ DYNASTY OF DELHI, 1451–1526

I. Buhlūl Lodī, d. July, 1489.

- Bārbak Shāh (Jaunpur).
- II. Nizām Khān, Sikandar Lodī d. Nov. 21, 1517.
  - III. Ibrāhīm Lodī d. April 21, 1526
- 'Ālam

KINGS OF BENGAL

(1) Eastern Bengal

Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh	1336 or 1338
Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Ghāzī Shāh	1346–1352

(2) Western Bengal and all Bengal

'Alā-ud-dīn 'Ālī Shāh	1339
Hājī Shams-ud-dīn Iliyās Shāh, Bhangara	1345
Sikandar Shāh	1357
Ghiyās-ud-dīn A'zam Shāh	1393
Saif-ud-dīn Hamza Shāh	1410
Shihāb-ud-dīn Bāyazīd	1412
Ganesh of Bhāṭūriā (Kāns Narāyan)	1414
Jadu, alias Jalāl-ud-dīn Muhammad Shāh	1414
Danuja-mardana	1417
Mahendra	1418
Shams-ud-dīn Ahmad Shāh	1431
Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh	1442
Rukn-ud-dīn Bārbak Shāh	1460
Shams-ud-dīn Yūsuf Shāh	1474
Sikandar Shāh II	1481
Jalāl-ud-dīn Fath Shāh	1481
Bārbak the Eunuch, Sultān Shāhzāda	1486
Malik Indīl, Fīrūz Shāh	1486
Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh II	1489
Sīdī Badr, Shams-ud-dīn Muzaffar Shah	1490

KINGS OF BENGAL—*continued.*

Sayyid 'Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh	1493
Nasīr-ud-dīn Nusrat Shāh	1518
'Alā-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh	1533
Ghiyās-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh	1533
Humāyūn, Emperor of Delhi	1538
Sher Shāh Sūr	1539
Khizr Khān	1540
Muhammad Khān Sūr	1545
Khizr Khān, Bahādur Shāh	1555
Ghiyās-ud-dīn Jalāl Shāh	1561
Son of preceding	1564
Tāj Khān Kararānī	1564
Sulaimān Kararānī	1572
Bāyazīd Khan Kararānī	1572
Dāūd Khān Kararānī	1572–1576

HOUSE OF ILIYĀS

- Hājī Shams-ud-dīn Iliyās
  - Sikandar Shāh
    - Ghiyās-ud-dīn A'zam Shāh
      - Saif-ud-dīn Hamza
        - Shams-ud-dīn II
        - Shihāb-ud-dīn Bāyazīd
          - Fīrūz
  - (:) Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh I
    - Rukn-ud-dīn Bārbak Shāh
      - Shams-ud-dīn Yūsuf Shāh
        - (:) Sikandar Shāh II
    - Jalāl-ud-dīn Fath Shāh
      - (:) Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd II

SAYYID KINGS OF BENGAL

- Asraf
  - Alā-ud-dīn Husain
    - Nusrat Shāh
      - Alā-ud-dīn Fīrūz
    - Mahmūd Shāh
      - Daughter = Khizr Khān

KARARĀNĪ DYNASTY

- Jamāl
  - Tāj Khān
  - Sulaimān
    - Bāyazīd
    - Dāūd Khān
  - Īmad
  - Iliyās

BAHMANĪ KINGS OF THE DECCAN

- (1) 'Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh
  - (2) Muhammad I
    - (3) Mujāhid
    - Fath Khān
  - (4) Dāūd
    - Muhammad Sanjar
  - Ahmad Khān
    - (8) Fīrūz
      - Hasan
      - Mubārak
        - Daughter = (11) Humāyūn. Zālim
          - (12) Nizām
          - (13) Muhammad III,
            - (14) Mahmūd
              - (15) Ahmad
              - (16) 'Alā-ud-dīn
              - (17) Walī-ullāh
              - (18) Kalīmullāh
          - Jamshīd (or Ahmad)
    - (9) Ahmad
      - (10) 'Alā-ud-dīn Ahmad
        - (11) Humāyūn. Zālim
        - Hasan Khān
        - Yahyā Khān
      - Dāūd
      - Mahmūd
      - Muhammad
  - Mahmūd Khān
    - (5) Muhammad II
      - Daughter m. Fīrūz
      - Daughter m. Ahmad
      - (6) Ghiyās-ud-dīn
      - (7) Shams-ud-dīn

RĀNĀS OF MEWĀR (From Ari Simha)

- Ari Simha
  - Hamīr or Hammīra I
    - Kshetra (Kheta) Simha
      - Lakshā (Lākhā)
        - Chūṇḍā
        - Mokala
          - Rānā Śri Kumbhakarna Sārvabhauma 1430–1469
            - Udaya Karan 1469–1474
            - Rājmalla (Rāyamalla) 1474–1508
              - Prithvirāja
                - Banbīr 1535–1537
              - Sangrāma (Sanga) I 1509–1527
                - Ratna Simha 1527–1532
                - Bikramajit 1532–1536
                - Udaya Simha (Udayapur) 1537–1572
                  - Pratāpa Simha I 1572–1597
                    - Amara Simha I 1597–1620
                      - Karan 1620–1628
                        - Jagat Simha I 1628–1652
                          - Rājā Simha I 1652–1680
                            - Bhīm Simha
                            - Jay Simha 1680–1698
                              - Amar Simha II 1699–1711
                                - Sangrāma Simha II 1711–1734
                                  - |

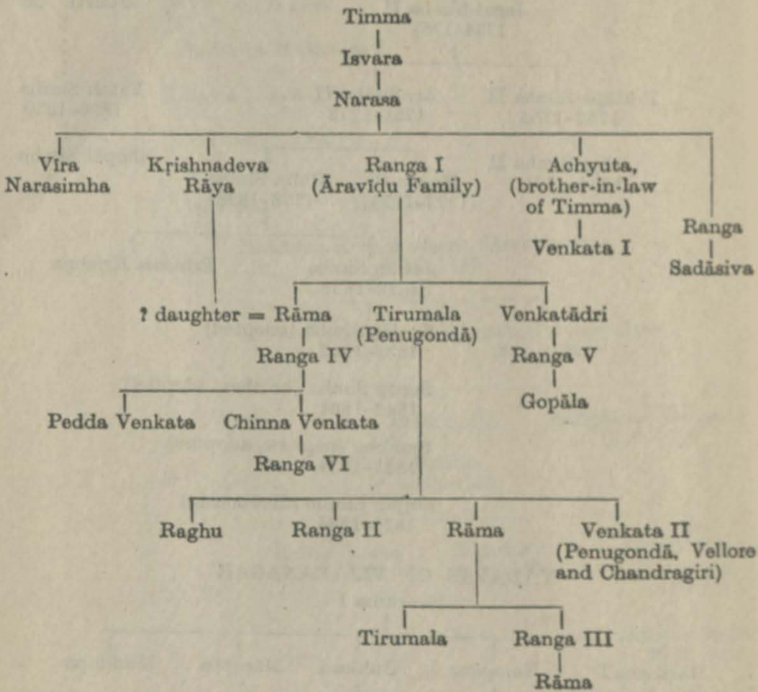
RĀNĀS OF MEWĀR (From Ari Simha)—*contd.*

- Jagat Simha II 1734–1751
  - Pratāpa Simha II 1752–1754
    - Rāja Simha II 1754–1761
  - Ari Simha II 1761–1773
    - Hamīr II 1773–1778
    - Bhīm Simha 1778–1828
      - Jawān Simha 1828–1838
        - Sardār Simha (adopted) 1838–1842
        - Sarup Simha (brother, adopted) 1842–1861
        - Sambhu (nephew, adopted) 1861–1874
        - Sujjan Simha (first cousin) 1874–1884
      - Princess Kṛishṇa
- Fourth on
  - ⋮
  - Fateh Simha 1884–1930
    - Bhopāl Simha

YĀDAVAS OF VIJAYANAGAR

- Sangama I
  - Harihara I
    - Daughter = ? Sister's son of Ballāla III
  - Kampana
    - Sangama II
  - Bukka I
    - Malladevī = Harihara II
      - Bukka II
      - Virupāksha
      - Deva Rāya I
        - Vīra Vijaya
          - Deva Rāya II
            - Mallikārjuna (Prauḍha Immadi Deva Rāya, ? Pina Rāo)
            - Virupāksha II
              - Praudha Deva
          - Pratāp Deva Rāya I
        - ? Daughter = Fīrūz Bahmanī
    - Kumāra Kampana
      - Jammana
    - Vīra-Viruppana
    - Bhāskara
    - Mallinātha
  - Mārappa
  - Muddapa

TULUVA AND ĀRAVĪDU KINGS OF VIJAYANAGAR, etc.



SŪR KINGS, 1540–1555

- Ibrāhīm Khān
  - Hasan Khān
    - I. Farid Khān, then Sher Khān (Sher Shāh) Killed May 22, 1545
      - II. Islām (Salīm) Shāh = Daughter (of Nizām Khān) d. November, 1554
        - Fīrūz Shāh murdered November, 1554
    - Nizām Khān
      - Daughter (married to II. Islām (Salīm) Shāh)
      - III. Mubāriz Khān Muhammad 'Ādil Shāh ('Ādilī or Audhli) killed at Monghyr, 1556
      - Daughter married to Ibrāhīm No. IV
      - Daughter married to Sikandar No. V
    - Sulaiman Ahmad and others
  - Ghāzī Khān
    - IV. Ibrāhīm Khān, Ibrāhīm Shāh, married sister of 'Ādilī; fled from upper India; killed in Orissa between July 1567 and July 1568.
  - (Name unknown)
    - V. Ahmad Khān Sikandar Shāh, married sister of 'Ādilī, retired to hills, 1556: expelled by Akbar, 1557; fled to Bengal and died, 1558–1559.

TIMŪRĪD DYNASTY—THE FIRST SIX RULERS

So-called "Barlās Turks", "Chaghātai Gurgani", or Mughul Emperors

- I. Zahir-ud-dīn, Bābur, d. 1530
  - II. Muhammad Humāyūn, d. 1556
    - III. Jalāl-ud-dīn Akbar, d. 1605
      - IV. Nūr-ud-dīn Muhammad, Jahāngīr, (Salīm), d. 1627
        - Khusrav
        - Parwez
        - V. Khurram Shihāb-ud-dīn Muhammad, Shāh Jahān, deposed 1658, died 1666.
          - Dārā Shukoh
          - Shujā
          - VI. Muhi-ud-dīn Muhammad Aurangzeb, 'Ālamgīr, d. 1707
          - Murād
        - Shahryār
      - Murād
      - Dāniyāl
    - Mīrzā Hakīm
  - Kāmrān
  - Hindāl
  - 'Askarī

THE LATER TIMŪRĪDS

- VI. Muhi-ud-dīn Muhammad Aurangzeb, 'Ālamgīr I, d. 1707
  - Muhammad Sultān, died 1676
  - VII. Mu'azzam, Shāh 'Ālam I, Bahādur Shāh I (acc. 1707, d. 1712)
    - VIII. Muiz-ud-dīn Jahāndār Shāh, killed 1713
      - XIV(a) 'Azīz-ud-dīn 'Ālamgīr II (acc. 1754, killed 1759)
        - XV(a) Mīrzā 'Abdullah 'Ālī Gohar, Shāh 'Ālam II (acc. 1759, blinded 1788, d. 1806)
          - XVI. Akbar Shāh II (acc. 1806, d. 1837)
            - XVII. Bahādur Shāh II, (acc. 1837, deposed 1858 at the time of the Sepoy Mutiny and d. 1862)
    - 'Azīm-us-Shān
      - IX. Muhammad Farrukhsiyar (acc. 1713, murdered 1719)
    - Rafī-ul-Qadr, Rafī-us-Shān
      - XII(b) Muhammad Ibrāhīm (1720)
      - XI. Rafī-ud-daulah (Shāh Jahān II acc. and death 1719)
      - X(a) Rafī-ud-Darajāt (acc. and death 1719)
    - Khujistah Akhtar, Jahān Shāh (killed in battle)
      - XII(a) Muhammad Shāh (acc. 1719, d. 1748)
        - XIII. Ahmad Shāh (acc. 1748, deposed 1754)
          - XV(b) Bīdār Bakht (1788)
  - Muhammad A'zam (killed at Jājau 1707)
    - Bīdār Bakht (killed at Jājau)
  - Akbar (d. in Persia 1704 or 1706)
    - X(b) Nekusiyar (1719)
  - Kām Bakhsh (killed near Hyderābād, 1708)
    - Muhi-us-Sunnat
      - XIV(b) Shāh Jahān III

BHONSLAS (CHHATRAPATI)

- Malojī (claims descent from the Royal House of Mewār).
  - Shāhjī
- Yādavas of Devagiri
  - Lukhji Jādhav
    - Jijā Bāī

Jijā Bāī = Shāhjī = Tukā Bāī

- Shāhjī = Tukā Bāī
  - Vyankojī or Ekojī (Tanjore)
- Jijā Bāī = Shāhjī
  - Shambhūjī (died at Kanakagiri)
  - Sai Bāī = Shivājī I = Soyra Bāī
    - (Sai Bāī) Yesu Bāī = Shambhūjī I
      - Shāhū I (Shivājī II)
        - Rām Rājā
          - Shāhū II (adopted)
            - Pratāpa Singh
            - Shāhjī Rājā
    - (Soyra Bāī) Tārā Bāī = Rājārām = Rajas Bāī
      - (Tārā Bāī) Shivājī III
        - Rām Rājā (adopted by Shāhū)
      - (Rajas Bāī) Shambhūjī II (Kolhāpur)
        - Shivājī IV
          - Shambhu
          - Shāhajī
            - Shivājī V
              - Rājārām II
                - Shivājī VI
                  - Shāhū Chhatrapati

THE PESHWĀS

- Viswanāth
  - I. Bālājī Viswanāth (1713)
    - II. Bājī Rāo I (1720)
      - III. Bālājī Bājī Rāo (1740)
        - Vishwās Rāo
        - IV. Mādhava Rāo Ballāl (1761)
        - V. Nārāyan Rāo (1772)
          - VII. Mādhava Rāo Nārāyan (1774)
      - VI. Raghunāth Rāo (Raghoba) (1773)
        - Amrita Rāo (adopted)
          - Vināyak Rāo
        - IX. Bājī Rāo II (1796–1818)
          - Nānā Sāheb (adopted)
        - VIII. Chimnājī Āppā (1796)
    - Chimnājī Āppā

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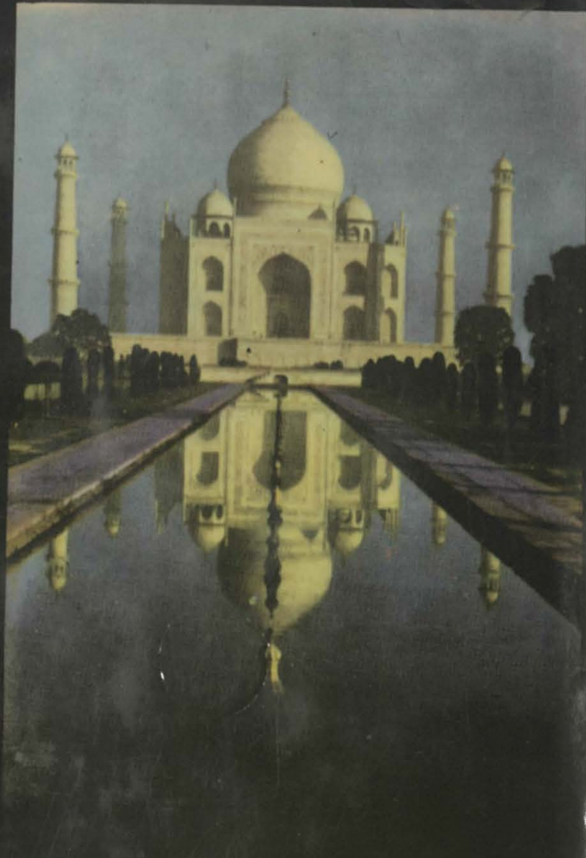
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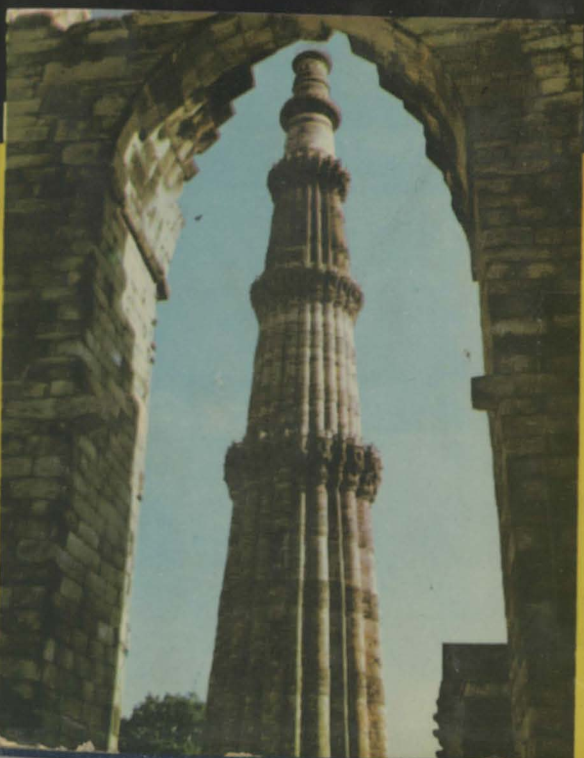
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One of the most breathtaking buildings on earth, Taj Mahal is the greatest masterpiece of Mughal architecture. This elegy in marble was built by the Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. Twenty thousand men worked for 22 years, from 1632 to 1653, on its construction. A vision of beauty and grandeur, the huge complex of buildings was adorned with delicate filigree work, calligraphic inscriptions, ornate *pietra dura* work and gardens with avenues of cypresses and cascading waters. The mausoleum stands on a terrace 20 feet high and is 315 feet square.





Qutb Minar, the Tower of Peace and Victory, was founded in Delhi by Qutb-ud-Din Aibak and completed by successive rulers of city. The Tower is 235 feet high and its summit is reached by 239 steps.